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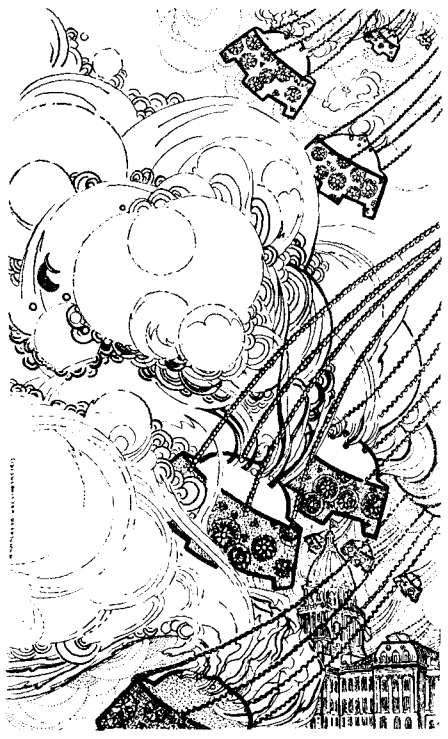

ILLINOIS STATE CAPITOL WITH THE CENSERS OF THE ANGELS SWINGING OVER IT.
A DRAWING BY VACHEL LINDSAY FOR HIS *Village Magazine*

Vachel Lindsay

VACHEL LINDSAY already takes his place in literary history. He was a bard, if any modern deserved that title. Rapt, enthusiastic, fixed in his loyalties and his inspirations, he was at the opposite spiritual edge from the intellectualism and verbal refinements of the modernists in poetry. Poetry for him was still a chant, and his sonorous, slightly nasal chanting, with upraised face and dropped eyelids, like a blind Illinois Homer, still lingers in our memories. His rhythms sought the rhythms of native speech, but unlike the cool and humorous colloquialisms of Robert Frost, it was an excited speech, like the shouts at camp meetings, or the boasts and boostings of oxmen and boatmen. Listening to him one was carried backward not forward, back of the American folk history now being so extensively written, back of Walt Whitman, who knew what Lindsay knew, had heard what he had heard, but made over the American saga to fit Emerson's philosophy, back into an authentic minstrelsy springing from a culture not rich but deep, because in it the primitive racial instincts had been rearoused by pioneering—the culture of the Mississippi valley, that same soil from which grew Huckleberry Finn.

And yet it would be much too simple to call Vachel Lindsay the last and best of American ballad makers. He had, in one sense, no predecessors, for the poetry of the negro, the revivalist, the frontiersman, though spiritually akin to his work, was seldom written down, seldom even formulated, and when it did struggle into print, took the conventional literary forms of its period. Only in the negro spirituals and in a very few ballads did it ever get that finality of utterance (however primitive) which makes literature. Lindsay, for all his closeness to the traditions of the common people, was not a true contemporary of the saga period of Johnny Appleseed or of Lincoln which inspired him. He belongs historically with the recreators of American history who in the twentieth century have recovered or rewritten the eighteenth and nineteenth century when the continent was won. And just as the skilful historian of our time has approached the saga of Oklahoma or the Santa Fé trail with as much care for its imaginative significance as for the facts, so Lindsay tapped the reservoirs of folk poetry with a modern sense of the value of the primitive and a full realization that both saga and ballad were art. This was not the cause of his success, which was due rather to the beating of his heart in the corn-belt rhythm, but without this modern consciousness he would have been either the Eddie Guest of the ballads or a mere exploiter of folk lore.

He was neither, but, in his limited field, a powerful poet. He was perhaps the only man in those corny regions still a frontiersman in spirit and yet a self-conscious historian in verse. His genius was like one of those rich pockets of ore that are deposited where one stratum ends at the beginning of a different country rock.

And this was his personal tragedy. His vein was rich, but narrow. It was hard to keep to it without divergence, on the one side into banality, on the other into extravagance. When he was not writing "General Booth Enters Heaven," or "The Congo," or "The Chinese Nightingale," he was trying to make psalms about a modern mid-Western capital, or poetry of people and experiences which were not only simple but flat. The sense of futility, due to the limitations wherein his genius flowered, showed itself in constant attempts to escape. Once he besought his friends in editorial offices to boom his reputation as an art critic, for that was going to be his future. Anything to escape from precarious balladry so difficult to cultivate sincerely as the saga age to which he belonged in spirit sank further and further into the past! The censers he swung over Springfield in his fantastic drawings were symbols of his attempt to keep the religion of enthusiasm in a Middle West slipping into mechanical mediocrity.

He revolted too against his own showmanship, but never while he was at it. The chanting of his poems held audiences from Oxford to Peoria, because, once launched upon the communal chant, his heart rose up like the Psalmist's, and the coldest of audiences was stirred. But the immense effort of recreating revivalism in a sophisticated scientific world wearied him, and his modern self-consciousness was pricked by a half patronizing enthusiasm to a realization that he was like the priestess of the Delphic Oracle who was authentic only when a little intoxicated and perhaps faintly absurd. He came a little late, and knew in his heart that only one General Booth could enter heaven, and that the Congo could not indefinitely boom. What could he do else—art, criticism, or the movies?

And, indeed, now that he is dead we can say with honor that his best is left behind him. He had the great good fortune to live all of his poetic life within the years allotted to him. As with Poe, there is room in an anthology for the best of his work, and that best is inimitable.

An Explorer in Poetic Fields

By JAMES RALSTON CALDWELL

ONE grows tired of being told how very contemporaneous contemporary life is, how many comfortable old mental garments one must discard if he is to get along in it. There is, in fact, an astonishing variety among individuals in respect to what is generally called "modernity." Many a Doctor of Philosophy in Letters still sees the world in terms of eighteenth century science, and of those people who (unlike Doctors of Philosophy in Letters) plume themselves on being modern, the majority are so only by proxy of the scientist, of whose conclusions they understand but little, the feel and stress of whose thought they realize not at all. Your ordinary cultivated man knows in a general way that the astronomers, physicists, and the rest have been busy of late, doing strange things to "truth." If put to it, he may even succeed, from moment to moment, in catching hold imaginatively of the vast, strange universe which they would toss at him, but he finds it a cold and terrifying thing, and is likely to toss it back to the scientists, whose particular concern he prefers it shall be. He will be modern if he must, but vicariously. The immediate and emotional apprehension of the new world is impossible to the ordinary cultivated man, not only because his information regarding it is limited, but also because, habituated as he is to a cozier and neater scheme, ordered and evaluated not by mathematical formulæ, but according to lucid and, on the whole, man-flattering doctrines, he finds the emotional strain of this immediate apprehension terribly severe. He is bewildered and frightened in the mysterious new mansions of thought; and while he acknowledges their existence, may even pronounce them noble fabrics, he shrinks from entering in. Herein, as I think, lies one of the chief sources of perplexity among poets and readers of poetry.

For the poet, the artist, of any age is perhaps chiefly distinguished from his fellows by the fact that his responses to life are extraordinarily vivid and thrilling and intense. Objects, ideas, emotions with him are "felt in the blood, and felt along the heart." He is caught in a net of sensation and apprehension, and is passionately aware of every strand. "A rose-mesh" Browning could call it eighty-one years ago. Whether or not this is an apt term, I do not know. But I think there are not many poets nowadays who name the human bondage by such a soft name.

At my hand is a recent volume of poems by the South African poet, Roy Campbell, the source to Edith Sitwell of renewed hope for the future of English poetry,—at least she says so on the jacket of the volume. One of the poems is called "Poets in Africa."

> For you and me a name of mud.
> A rash of stars upon the sky,
> A pox of flowers on the earth,
> To such diseases of the eye
> Habituated from our birth.

And farther on in the same piece is a reference to "the annual eczema of flowers."

Such an attitude toward nature represents, of course, the extreme and antipodal opposite from Browning's strenuous contentment; yet it is by no means uncharacteristic of modern poetry. References to the moon as "a scab in the sky," as "a drunkard's half dollar shoved across the bar of night," to "the leprous green of spring,"—these and the like are plentiful in modern poetry, and indicate what a bed of thorns the rose mesh has proven to be. Indeed, there can be no doubt that a great many very thoughtful modern poets believe that if they elect to walk with truth as modern knowledge (which is scientific knowledge) presents it, they must pass perforce into a waste land. Whether they are right, or merely bitter with disappointment in a hope of science and of civilization which was never very reasonable, need not concern us. The point is that precisely those poets whom we call most "modern" are those in whom the sense of disillusionment, of desolation, of spiritual dryness is most acute. And since many very intelligent readers are still unaware, or at most, but half aware, that there has been any desolation, are not at all disillusioned, since they cannot share the poet's poignant apprehension of the havoc wrought by modern thought among the older faiths and beliefs, modern poetry which voices this awareness becomes for them "queer" and "morbid" and "unpleasant." For this reason, as I think, more than any other, much very fine modern poetry is unpopular. For this reason also, it may be, essays such as the present are not wholly without warrant.

The "queer, morbid, unpleasant" modern poet is probably not greatly troubled by his loss of audience. Humanity, he thinks, will one day discover for itself how the case stands for faith and belief. The question which most puzzles him, I suppose, is to discover what, in this immense, terrible, and indifferent universe, in which there is "neither certitude of peace nor help from pain," is the poet's place. What is there left for him to say? In a very interesting article which ap-

This Week

"SWISS FAMILY MANHATTAN."
Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON.
"MR. AND MRS. PENNINGTON."
Reviewed by STANLEY WENT.
"NEW ROADS TO PROSPERITY."
Reviewed by ROBERT K. HAAS.
"LYAUTEY."
Reviewed by C. E. ANDREWS.
"MRS. SIGOURNEY."
Reviewed by HARRY HAYDEN CLARK.
"A NATURALIST IN BRAZIL."
Reviewed by NORMAN TAYLOR.
"HISTORY OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY."
Reviewed by HARRY T. COSTELLO.
"THE DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY."
Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS.
NEBULAR HYPOTHESIS.
By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.
NATION-WIDE.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

THE CHENEY REPORT.
Reviewed by ROBERT S. LYND.

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peared some time ago in this *Review*, Mr. T. K. Whipple wrote that it was the business of poetry to release in the reader a sense of power. With this statement I think most modern poets would agree. The difficulty is that the modern poet is precisely he who is most sadly and profoundly aware of his own and of others' present powerlessness. Hence he is in the unhappy situation of one least able to perform that which it is his especial function to be doing. Biased and rooted in humanity, he knows a universe wherein humanity grows steadily less in cosmic consequence; committed by the nature of art to principles of order and design, he sees all patterns, all cherished values, strewn in disarray.

To describe the various attempts made by the poets to resolve this predicament will be in effect to describe the various modern poetic attitudes. Obviously, these are numerous as poets are numerous on the wide earth. Yet it will be profitable to touch upon two or three of them as broadly representative of contemporary poetry.

In the first place, the modern poet may, under the ægis of Professor Babbitt and the New Humanists, deny that modern knowledge has really affected the human situation in any significant degree. Man, he may say, is the proper study of mankind. He will better concern himself with the fundamental and unchanging problems of human conduct than with the hypotheses which the scientist, as it seems to him, attempts to make by analogy with the behavior of the lower animals. Decency, restraint, the moral values are a part of his concern as they have been of the great ones of the past. This solution, while it is not without advocates among the poets, has been hitherto more productive of critical than of purely creative effort.

As a second solution of the predicament, the poet may elect to face stoutly the sterile earth and darkened sky, and strive in his art to plumb the depths of the despair he sees reflected in them. Thomas Hardy, in "The Return of The Native," predicted that the sterner aspects of nature would come more and more to be held beautiful, because they speak her stern verities. And so the lyric pessimists among the modern poets (and let me say I do not count Mr. Roy Campbell as one of these) may, paradoxically, discover a solemn and noble beauty in those very aspects of nature and of thought which signify most clearly the frustration and decay of humanity. The symphony of the spheres is no less majestic because its theme is a dirge of human hope.

Both the New Humanism and this lyric pessimism are attitudes maintained in more or less explicit reference to the perplexity and spiritual paralysis noted above as characteristic of our time. Yet it is in the more purely esthetic, the technical, aspects of modern poetry that the state of the modern soul (if the word may be permitted) is, in a sense, even more directly reflected. For the contemporary poet, robbed of his old store of certainties, infirm of faith in Truth and Beauty and the infinite capacities of man, has turned back to the study of his art in and for itself. He will discover if there is not yet some power which poetry alone can release, and will strive to invent and perfect means of releasing it. To this end, and with the aid, perhaps, of the modern knowledge of psychology, he reinvestigates the whole esthetic proces; returning to work with new forms and new principles of attack.

And so a third solution of the poet's predicament emerges as the consequence of this renewed interest in poetic technique, this renewed scrutiny of the esthetic experience. According to his attitude, the poet utilizes the modern knowledge of the esthetic experience, together with his own new resourcefulnes in technique, to provide a purely artistic resolution of his emotional necessities, to write poems which shall be independent of, and irrelevant to, all but esthetic values.

T. S. Eliot's poetry, like that of most modern poets, reflects in varying degree each of these attitudes. That he has developed strong Humanist inclinations is known to everybody who reads him. Equally evident is the fact that he has been one of the most notable poets of desolation. "The Waste Land" has all but established itself as a classic of spiritual dearth. Neither in his recent faith, however (which, indeed, sits a little oddly upon him) nor in his earlier lack of one is Eliot chiefly distinctive. What lends his poetry its peculiar character and its peculiar force is rather a matter of technique. It is the isolated and unqualified reflection in his poetry of his sensory and emotional experience; in short, his method of achieving that purely esthetic resolution mentioned a moment ago.

In the collection of critical essays entitled "For Lancelot Andrews" Mr. Eliot writes of Chapman and Donne that "they had in common with the greatest, a quality of sensuous thought, or of thinking with the senses, or of the senses thinking, of which the exact formula remains to be described." Other critics of Eliot have rightly fastened upon this statement as an apt description of Eliot's own method of writing. With the exception of Mr. Richard Blackmur, late of *The Hound and Horn*, they have evidently agreed with the poet that the quality of sensuous thought is indescribable. It may be an overweening ambition which prompts me to attempt a more exact formulation of it, to define the excellences and limitations which it involves.

I should like to recall at the outset a simple distinction between thought, in the usual sense of the word, and what may be called apprehension. Implicit in the word thought as it is ordinarily used, is the idea of a formulation of experience for purpose of statement. Until the statement is uttered, or ready for utterance, the formula is incomplete. The purpose and consequence of statement is action, and to any statement all matters not conducive and assistant to action must be irrelevant. The true and well ordered statement modifies as efficiently as possible (by excision of all irrelevant matters) previous concepts, and results in a new and practical adjustment to circumstance. Doubtless this definition of thought as an intellectual process essentially practical in its nature will at first seem arbitrary and over-restrictive. Yet I hope that when the distinction which I wish to draw between thought and apprehension is complete, the reader will see what I am about, and if he disagrees with me, our disagreement will be solely one of terms.

For by apprehension I mean merely a full experience of an object as that object is presented to the sense, to the emotion, and to the "mind," or thought stream. This full experience may be preliminary or it may be subsequent to statement, but it is not itself directed toward action. Rather it requires concentration upon the object in and for itself. None of the qualities of the object is irrelevant to apprehension, and the measure of its completeness is the absence of any bias or exclusiveness whatever. It avoids or postpones formulation, since, as soon as a satisfactory statement is prepared, apprehension becomes superfluous and ceases, statement being a summary, not an experience of an object.

The poetic approach to a physical object will evidently be that of apprehension. If we recall Emily Dickinson's presentation of a humming-bird:

> A route of evanescence,
> With a revolving wheel;
> A resonance of emerald
> A rush of cochineal. . . .

and compare the same object as given in, say Frank M. Chapman's "Handbook of Birds," the point is clear:

Trochilus colubris, Upper parts bright, shining green, wings and tail fuscous, with purplish reflections. . . . etc., etc.

In the poem we experience the humming-bird in and for itself; in the handbook we get a formula of an ultimately practical nature. The formula is about the humming-bird; the poem is the humming-bird. Both poem and formula are good in themselves, but the good provided by the poem is the more immediate; for while the validity of the definition (the formula) cannot be fully estimated until it is put to the test of action, until we wish to do something about a humming-bird, and do it on the basis of the information herein supplied, the validity of the poem begins and ends with the poem, and is tested by the degree of pleasure we derive from lingering over the humming-bird, from fingering it, so to speak, with highly sensitive fingers, lent, of course, by the poet.

Now if the statement of Eliot's quoted a little back is true, not only physical objects, but also thoughts may be dwelt upon, lingered over in this same fashion without reference to action, or to anything save this lingering, fingering process. This, as I think, and only this, can be meant by "sensuous thought, or thinking with the senses, or the senses thinking." The idea is striking and radical in its implications.

The relation between "statement," or "thought," or "sentiment," on the one hand, and "apprehension," or "suggestion," or "feeling" on the other in poetry has, as every one knows, long been a matter for critical difference. Wordsworth, for instance, said "poetry is truth carried alive into the heart by passion." Truth, in other words, is the essential matter, and passion (feeling) is desirable as lending an added grace to an essentially educative purpose, that is, a practical communication. Professor Lowes in "Convention and Revolt in Poetry" defines the relation with a slightly different stress:

> . . . the poet builds up his fabric out of both, the basic meanings and the overtones . . . it is the successful blending of the undefined and the definite in words that constitutes the triumph of the poet's art.

Sense and suggestion (statement and apprehension) are here indicated as equal elements in the poet's compound, what is thought and what is felt, working in a magical counterplay, and equally effective to the purpose.

Compare now the statements of two modern critics, Mr. I. A. Richards and Mr. Richard Blackmur, both of them admirers, and the latter a very subtle critic, of Mr. Eliot's verse:

> Misunderstanding and underestimation of poetry is mainly due to over emphasis of the thought in it. . . . It is never what a poem *says* which matters, but what it *is*. The poet is not writing as a scientist. (*Richards*)
>
> We do not wish thought in poetry unless it is felt thought, unless it is not thought at all. The distinction is arbitrary. Thought is schematic and dialectic . . . the structure of an emotion is felt, is organic. (*Blackmur*)

It is again a question of formulation for an ulterior and practical end as against pleasure in the experience itself; and again it must be agreed that the especial nature of poetry is to give pleasure, not to educate. In so far we may agree that poetic thought is felt thought, and that poetry is not truth carried alive into the heart by passion; it is the passion in the heart.

Well then, what will be the nature of thoughtful poetry written in the faith just enunciated? Take for comparison two passages of poetry, one of Gray's of statement, of *thought*, and one of Eliot's in which the thought is conveyed as *felt*:

> To each his suff'rings: all are men,
> Condemned alike to groan;
> The tender for another's pain,
> Th' unfeeling for his own.
> Yet Ah! why should they know their fate?
> Since sorrow never comes too late,
> And happiness too swiftly flies.
> Thought would destroy their paradise.
> No more; where ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise.

This is an excellent bit of statement, a statement of the imminence of death and disaster in life. The practical truth which it utters is sound enough to have been kept and quoted for nearly two hundred years. But it provides mainly an educative rather than an esthetic good. The following lines from Eliot's "Whispers of Immortality," though they convey a thought, a somewhat similar thought, are poetry because the thought is presented to an almost purely esthetic purpose:

> Webster was much possessed by death,
> And saw the skull beneath the skin,
> And breastless creatures underground
> Leaned backwards with a lipless grin;
> Daffodil bulbs instead of balls
> Stared from the sockets of the eyes.
> He knew that thought clings round dead limbs
> Tightening their lusts and luxuries.

To say that Eliot is in these lines attempting to carry into our hearts the fact that life is instinct with death, and that in order to do so, he says it as passionately as possible is to miss the point; to say that the idea and the feelings awakened combine to produce an effect is to come but a little nearer to it. The feelings *are* the poetry.

The effect in this short passage, and indeed, in a great deal of Mr. Eliot's poetry, is achieved by the awakening of vivid sensations, which contrast violently with one another. Eliot has, in fact, been criticized, and I think justly, on the ground that these violently contrasting sensations frequently do not fuse to produce a new unity, that the elements of his poetry are centrifugal rather than centripetal in force. And herein, I believe, consists a necessary limitation consequential to the sensuous treatment of thought.

For thought consists not of sensations alone, but of sensations arranged according to certain concepts. Identity, difference, number, time, magnitude are a few of the fundamental concepts which we use to organize sensation (including, of course, imagined sensation) in thought. And while sensations are a part of that process of apprehension which we have seen to be especially characteristic of the poetic experience, these concepts, having no sensible existence, and capable of being known only in relation to specific, that is, sensory experience, cannot, according to the stipulations agreed upon, be themselves poetically presented. Our casual expressions, such as Father Time, "different as day and night," "alike as two peas," represent essentially poetic efforts to experience them by themselves, through imagining them in highly characteristic functions. But the particular experience is not to be avoided, and we end, not with an apprehension of time, but of an old man, not of difference, but of day and night, not of likeness, but of two identical peas.

By the same token, any attempt at the

I Saw the King

By EDWARD DAVISON

I SAW the King of England with forty-eight guardsmen
Riding by St. Clement's Danes on an April morning.
His coach had eight horses with gold and silver harness,
And Mary, Her Majesty, sat there beside him
Bowing to the multitude all along the Strand.
Men stood bareheaded and women were curtseying
And the young children waved scarves and kerchiefs,
Many a bright color, as the coach went by.
So I fell to thinking of the Richards and Henrys,
The Great Elizabeth and Charles the Martyr,
How many Kings and Queens had travelled that road
Back from the City of London how many times.
Thus my own forefathers must have stood to see them
As I today am standing (said I to myself),
And joined in the cheering with a high heart—
God Save the King of England, and God Save the Queen!

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presentation of thought as felt thought must become largely a presentation of the particular and sensible components of thought. The success of the poet will then depend upon the selection and arrangement of these components in such fashion that they will themselves define the concept which relates them. The anodes and cathodes (to borrow the physicist's terms) must be so charged and so arranged as to produce inevitably the current intended. Such a poetry will obviously deal largely in symbols, since these are reprehensible objects used to represent concepts, and it will be limited to a fairly simple arrangement of them.

Mr. Eliot's best poems, "Sweeney among the Nightingales," and "Bleistein with a Baedeker; Burbank with a Cigar" fulfil these conditions. The former presents two simple elements in simple contrast, the banal and tawdry actual, apprehended in the unforgettable scene of the sordid little café, with the remote, the heroic, and ideal in the last thrilling stanza. In "Bleistein with a Baedeker; Burbank with a Cigar" the formula is approximately the same; a commonplace modern Jew and a commonplace modern Scot are etched against the background of Venice the olden and golden.

The longer and more complex poems, "The Waste Land" among them, I find less successful than these two. The symbols in "The Waste Land" seem to me frequently lacking in explosive force, representative of intellectual rather than emotional experience. One need not object to Eliot's use of highly charged phrases and lines from poets of the past as active agents in his own alchemy, for while this practice makes complete realization of the poem possible only to those for whom the passages have full emotional value, it gives (for them) added depth and texture to his poetry, and binds past and present in a curiously dynamic fashion. But in so far as "The Waste Land" depends for its effects upon such recondite particulars as the Tarot pack of cards, or even the Fisher King, it will generally fail to realize its emotional intention. One is willing to be told that the Tarot pack of cards is the symbol for every life, willing, if need be to read Miss Weston's "From Ritual to Romance," but being told what these things stand for will not suffice to make them genuinely and emotionally representative. Significant in this connection is the fact that each of three very sympathetic critics (Messrs. Richards, Blackmur, and Williamson) feels impelled fo find in "The Waste Land" a "conclusion" and each discovers a different one.

I hope I shan't be misunderstood as objecting to "The Waste Land" because it means different things to different people. Eliot's poetry will always challenge and pique, rather than poise, the sensitive imagination. The fault I do find with it, and indeed with many of his longer poems, is that too often the arrangement of the symbols is lax and confused, and the symbols themselves not eloquent, that the poet has not entirely recognized the limitations of his technique, and has consequently not fully realized its possibilities.

It is because they are faulty in this same respect that Mr. Eliot's recent poems, "Ash Wednesday" for example, do not satisfy the high standard established by "Sweeny," "Bleistein," and "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." In them is reflected an effort, a striving to advance a technique which the poet has never quite thoroughly mastered.

T. S. Eliot, for intensity, for subtlety, for something like virtuosity in the control of emotional effects, will be a permanently important figure in the history of English poetry. He will also be permanently important as a great explorer in an age of exploration, as the rediscoverer of a poetry of sensuous thought. Yet, if I am not mistaken, readers of him fifty years hence will be sorry that he did not fully comprehend the nature of his discovery, did not accept its limitations and practise its excellence. Unless, of course, Mr. Eliot shall succeed in producing more Sweeneys, more Bleisteins, more Prufrocks between now and then.

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Discovering America

SWISS FAMILY MANHATTAN. By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1932. $2.

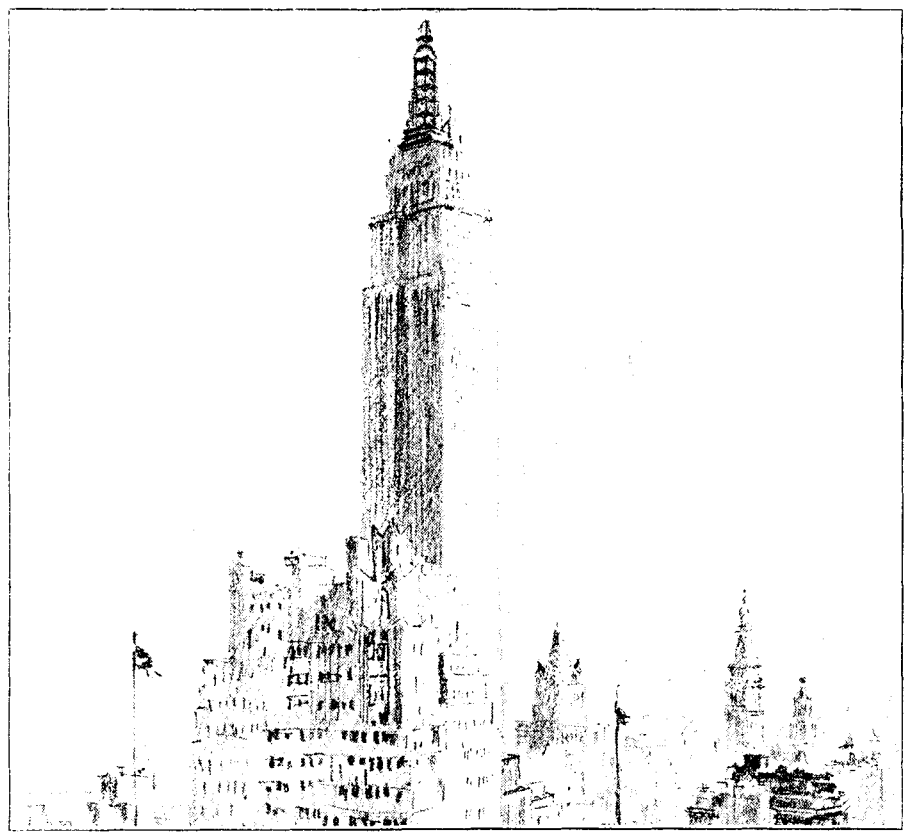
Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

MR. MORLEY adapts the characters and adventures of that model, not to say exasperating, family named Robinson, to those of a family also Swiss and of corresponding innocence and adaptability. The father of the family is Chief of the Bureau of Available Reference to the League of Nations, and also a Lutheran clergyman. They take a vacation tour in an airship, are wrecked in fog and storm, and left stranded on what appears to them a gigantic tree of steel branches with gorillas in overalls clambering about in it. It turns out to be the yet unfinished Empire State Building.

It is a difficult "stunt" to tell a story in the first person of an eccentric specialist in card catalogues, for the story has to be told anyhow, whatever happens to the eccentric. But it is good to hear the voice of Mr. Morley, even behind the masque of his protagonist.

The publishers need not have emphasized on the wrapper that this is a "new novel." They only succeed in emphasizing the fact that it is hardly, or only incidentally, a novel. That is not the point of it. Properly classified, it is the excellent old "stunt" practised by Swift and Voltaire, by Montesquieu in "The Persian Letters," G. Lowes Dickinson in "The Chinese Official," and numberless others, usually for the purposes of satire. One is invited to look at the familiar aspects of our society through "the pure all judging eyes" of somebody from Mars, or some such hypothetical alien. But Mr. Morley is too kindly and amused to be a satirist with poison in his sting. He likes the "American scene" and looks at the towers of New York with eyes not at all terrified, nor with the dour glance of reform. "Oh God!" cries the Chief of Available Reference, "spare these blessed pagans, nor taint them with the malady of thought. Never, never civilize them and so destroy their charm." Gazelle, his flapper (1930 model) friend, "had much chastity of mind, but none whatever of language or behavior." Her mother had run off romantically with a Mexican trapper. Her father was an amiable banker, who drifted about with a cocktail shaker, imperturbable of health and good looks. She took the Available Reference away on a wild lecture tour. His English was uncertain. He thought the plural of "spouse" was "spice" by analogy with mouse and mice; there was no analogy, the plural of "spouse" being "bigamy"; besides the audiences liked his plural better.

My impression is that Mr. Morley writes too much and too easily to reach the heights of his possibilities. There is all his customary charm in this book, but it seems a little casual and frail. He is a natural essayist of the tradition of Lamb and Leigh Hunt, and perhaps like them will be best remembered as a commentator on the byways of the Great City (where indeed this book belongs) and the byways of books. As a novelist he does not seem to grip anything very hard. "Gazelle" in this book is more clearly a character than any other. She is a well-observed type. She helps us to like and believe in the shocking and confident young people of our time. But she is not a creation, a personality. What she says is delightful, but what she is one does not really know. And that may be accurate enough, since one does not really know what they are, these young people whom she typifies, nor do they know themselves.



THE MOORING MAST TREE.
FROM A DRAWING BY BERNON HOWE BAILEY, IN "EMPIRE STATE" (RUDGE).

Youth in our time is not quite the same phenomenon that it used to be. Like New York it changes its skyline overnight and traffic pours through it with a speed and volume unexampled. But its vigor and its confidence leave small room for pessimism.

The Chief of Available Reference suspects that it is unsafe for Europeans to have much to do with this volatile American race. "Europeans are sober, patient, mercantile folk, but Americans are temperamental and credulous. . . . Their civilization is like beer, it has a big frothy head, but underneath it is clear, nourishing, and bitter. The intelligent people are rarely heard from, for (as one of their prophets said) they live lives of quiet desperation." It would not seem safe for a Lutheran clergyman to be taken to lunch on five minutes' acquaintance by a young lady who immediately nicknames him "Chutney" and calls him "darling," but he likes it, seeing the beer beneath the foam.

After a triumphant cross-country career with a lecture on America as wise as it is ridiculous, and after his wife (who escaped separately from the giant tree) is led by her shrewd Robinsonian children into the rapid Americanization of the speak-easy business, the family Robinson settles with enthusiasm on a Long Island highway where they conduct a League of Nations filling station, built in the classic style, with petrol pumps in front of the temple like totems or Polynesian idols. "Here, as at a wayside shrine, the worshippers of Internal Combustion pause for obeisance and repairs." And so, with the aid of bicarbonate of soda, they learn to live in America quite equably.

Old Wine in New Bottles

MR. & MRS. PENNINGTON. By FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG. New York: Harper & Bros. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by STANLEY WENT

FOR this novel, which is the January selection of the Book of the Month Club, Mr. Young has taken an old and hackneyed melodramatic plot of early Victorian days and attempted to hang upon it a novel of modern English life. This interesting experiment one comes upon with a not unpleasing sense of surprise when one is almost half way through the book. The early part of the volume is taken up with a painstaking preparation of the scene and a rather over-elaborate introduction of the *dramatis personæ*.

The plot, when it comes along, is nothing in the world but old-fashioned melodrama. Played "straight" on Mr. Christopher Morley's recent stage in Hoboken, it would undoubtedly have been a "wow." There is the sweet and inexperienced young heroine married to a worthy young man of no particular distinction but of most estimable qualities. There is a dear old guardian, her uncle, a gently puttering old creature who almost by sheer inadvertence gets himself into the position of misappropriating a sum of money that he holds in trust for his niece. There is the masterful business man, an excellent minor villain, who plots the ruin of his old school friend, the guardian uncle, in order that he may have his wicked sensual way with the beautiful niece. There is also the major villain who would draw hisses from any gallery—handsome, suave, and well-dressed, an incredibly oily person who schemes and achieves the seduction of the inexperienced heroine. One good trick Mr. Young has omitted from his bag: oddly enough, there is no humorous relief, which seems a pity. On the other hand we have the well-known early Victorian veteran of the Napoleonic wars transmogrified into a disabled temporary officer of the Great War. In the Victorian melodrama he would have stumped about on a wooden leg. Here he presents a disfigured face, walks with a limp, and suffers from a combination of shell-shock and alcohol. Otherwise he is the same character, dumbly and honorably devoted to the beautiful heroine and to the deportment of the parade ground.

Now all this is very well and it makes, on the whole, a pretty good story; but the thing that makes it good is the old-fashioned plot itself and not Mr. Young's attempt to adapt it to modern circumstances. Where the story is weak it is weak precisely on account of its modern setting. That old melodramatic stuff was well enough and went over big because one believed in the premises, and the major premise was that the heroine, besides being young and beautiful and inexperienced, was really sweet and good and angelic in every way, and somehow, through no fault of her own, got mixed up in the machinations of the Machiavellian villain. But if you give your heroine modern ideas and modern education it is asking a little too much of the reader to believe that she stepped into the villain's toils in any way except with her eyes open. In other words, the success of the melodramatic plot depends almost exclusively upon holding the reader's sympathy with the heroine, and Mr. Young fails to convince the reader that his heroine is much more than a rather silly little sensualist. No doubt, however, when the story is transmuted into the pure gold of a Hollywood production, for which it is admirably adapted, these difficulties will be ironed out—and the ex-temporary officer will easily be developed into the necessary comic relief.

"One was prepared for a certain devaluation of Ruskin stock," says the London *Observer*, "but it is still surprising to find that the stone by which he had dedicated Lady Margaret's Well, at Carshalton, to the memory of his mother should have been discovered among the flagstones in a local road. It is to the disorder and desecration of this pool that he refers in the opening paragraphs of "The Crown of Wild Olive."

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Modern Money Economy

NEW ROADS TO PROSPERITY: THE CRISIS AND SOME WAYS OUT. By PAUL M. MAZUR. New York: The Viking Press. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by ROBERT K. HAAS

ALTHOUGH written during the maelstrom of the current depression, this short and pithy book is timely but in no sense ephemeral, for Mr. Mazur has been thinking about his subject over a considerable period. In 1928 his "American Prosperity: Its Causes and Consequences" was published, and two years later "America Looks Abroad" appeared. "New Roads to Prosperity," he tells us, is intended as the final volume of this trilogy, whose main theme is that "the justification of economic activity is the welfare of mankind." Few readers of it will remain unconvinced of the validity of his thesis that capitalism must stand or fall by this test; that its leaders must give up their blind opportunism if chaos is to be avoided; that for America the industrial revolution has ended and a new era is being entered upon—an era which she must understand and to which she must adjust herself.

Fortunately, the public mind is becoming increasingly aware of the vital necessity of getting some of this understanding, but because the subject is so enormously complex many people are afraid to come to grips with it. With this book as guide such fears prove vain, for while, of course, it does not pretend to analyze our business structure or to diagnose its ills in close detail, its two hundred pages do something which is probably much more important: they present a clear picture of our modern money economy in broad outlines, well lighted and distinctly accented. And its simple and non-technical language is in keeping with its brevity which, be it noted, is not the brevity of incompleteness but rather that of thoughtful elimination and compression.

After a short review of the history of the boom years 1928 and 1929, and of the débacle that has followed, the author examines the causes of failure, with special emphasis on one of the fundamental fallacies in our system as we operate it: the fact that we have come to look on money as an end in itself, and have lost sight of its essential function, which is to facilitate trade. We have also, he points out, ceased to realize that production is desirable only when properly linked with consumption. The two must be brought back into balance, and the way out is not through curtailment of the former (which would be a step backward) but through an increase in the latter. Mr. Mazur advocates the extension on a wide scale of the financing of consumer purchases, as one of the chief methods by which this could be brought about. There are many economists who would challenge him as to the ultimate desirability of this method. Most, however, would agree with his view that permanent improvement in the world situation would result were the Young Plan debts to be abandoned, and would share his enthusiasm over the advantages which might flow from the establishment of a National Economic Council. He believes a more liberal corporation attitude toward dividend disbursements would be an important aid to recovery, and that a nation-wide slum rebuilding program, initiated at this time, would be not only socially desirable but commercially feasible. And he ardently champions the wholesale adoption of the five day week, on the theory that more leisure makes for more wants, and therefore for more consumption—the great desideratum.

Although the sections on money and credit and on recent changes in the banking system are full of interest, the chapter on the gold crisis is perhaps the high spot of this fascinating little book. It explains in amazingly small compass the workings of the gold standard internationally, the events that forced England to abandon it, and the effects of that action. The author thinks it not impossible that the United States may elect to follow England's lead, thereby disposing completely of an inadequate system which has outlived its usefulness.

Mr. Mazur occasionally yields, in the heat of argument, to the temptation to predict the unpredictable. But these few lapses are unimportant; his provocative book is one of the best that has appeared of late, and should be read by everyone interested in understanding the pattern of the strange and exciting dance of economic forces in whose mazes we are all being whirled about today at such headlong speed.

A Builder of Empire

LYAUTEY. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by C. E. ANDREWS

WHEN a biographer turns from choosing his subjects among the great figures of the past and writes the life of a living man, he must change his approach and even change his style. He must write the life from documents furnished by the subject himself, he must not offend living persons who figure in the story, and he must interpret the subject as the subject himself wishes to be presented to the world. The author is no longer a biographer but an assistant in the writing of an autobiography. When André Maurois wrote "Ariel," he felt free to create an entertaining novel by a vivid dramatization of all that was bizarre and amusing among the facts of Shelley's life. (Unfortunately he forgot to mention that Shelley was a poet.) Disraeli made the subject of another delightful novel. And in "Byron" Monsieur Maurois gave us brilliant biographical writing, balanced and tempered, as well as entertaining. It is unfortunate that this, his greatest book, should have failed to attain a popular success in France, in the present chaotic state of things literary.

Since English subjects are, at the moment, out of date, this time Monsieur Maurois has turned to a theme that will be popular with his French public, the story of the life of the great builder of France's colonial empire in North Africa. Here is a glorious subject for a biography, but the real biography cannot be written for another fifty years. "Lyautey" is really the great marshal's own story of his career, written from recollections, letters, documents, and diaries and given form by a brilliant writer. The biographer has had no chance to balance opinions; he does not dare to amuse us with the faint irony of his style. He has hardly dared to touch with his dramatic ability the great moments of the story. But the moments are there. And the personality back of them is one of the most able and clear-minded, and at the same time most appreciative and sympathetic.

The story of Lyautey's youth is the struggle of a young aristocrat brought up in a Catholic and strictly royalist atmosphere, to find a place in the service of the Republic. At one of the family dinners, which were tri-weekly affairs, his great grandmother, aged ninety-two, thanked God that among her sixty descendants there were no republicans! And with five generals in the family, since Napoleon's time, it was natural that the young Lyautey should have turned to the army for a career. After much reading of modern literature, and especially after a visit to Rome, he lost faith in his religion. Like many young royalists in the late 'eighties, he came to accept republicanism. He made the disturbing discovery that other worlds existed besides that of the followers of the traditional order. He was ambitious, but bored with his life and had no clear aim.

He made acquaintances among men who loved books—Coppée, the poet, Brunetière, the critic, and Voguë, author of a history of the Russian novel. He met Henri de Régnier and Marcel Proust. His ideal was the soldier who was passionately attached to reading and study. He became exactly the opposite of the usual army officer, unlettered and narrow, arrogantly glorifying obedience rather than intelligence. In 1894, when he was forty, he was given a post on the general staff in Indo-China. Here through contact with Galliéni, the man of action who was also a man of foresight, Lyautey learned the colonial policy which he later put in practice when he became the ruler of Morocco. He learned that the European who wishes to control, must not try to destroy native patterns of thought and life, but must rule through coöperation. He followed his chief to an important post in Madagascar, and, by combining patience with firmness, brought order and prosperity to an unhappy country wasted by brigandage.

He was a serious-minded man devoted to a great purpose. He remained aloof from the quarrels at home. In the Dreyfus affair he judged both factions critically from his distant colonial post. When he returned to France he found himself unhappy, out of sympathy with the France of his time. He detested the cynicism which had taken possession of his generation. He longed for a place in which he could act and create.

His opportunity came in 1903, when Jonnart, governor of Algeria discovered

LYAUTEY.

him. He was sent to command the division at Ain-Sefra, the troubled border region next to the always revolting tribes of Eastern Morocco. Here in the vast monotony of the high plateau on the edge of the Sahara, Lyautey found scope for his military genius and his administrative skill. The anarchic state of Morocco under Abdul Aziz was a great danger for the colony of Algeria. It was a difficult situation for a French army which by treaty was not allowed to pursue marauders an inch beyond the frontier. Lyautey acquitted himself of the task, struggled with ministries at Paris, with colonists in the *bled*, as well as with tribesmen in ambush. He began his policy of peaceful penetration, a control which spread silently but surely, like a spot of oil on a piece of paper.

When, as the result of the diplomacy at Algeciras, the German attempt at Agadir, the war between two brother sultans, and events at Casablanca, the French assumed a protectorate over Morocco, Lyautey became, once more, the man of the hour. As resident general we see him, just pacifying dissident tribes, cautiously extending the French ascendency from post to post. And even when the country was in a state of war, he planned cities and developed roads and worked for a peace based on mutual interests.

Like the great Elizabethan soldiers and statesmen, Lyautey is a man of action, of intelligence, and of vision. After a day of Moroccan heat, presiding at councils, riding a hundred miles, haranging tribesmen, preaching, disputing, dictating dispatches, at two o'clock in the morning he "washes his hands and says, 'Fie upon this quiet life! I want work!'" And yet he is thoughtful of native monuments, preserves the beauty of old native towns, encourages native art. And like a Greek general on the eve of a battle, he has another literary officer read poetry to him!

From 1913 to 1919, Lyautey was in the position of an absolute sovereign. He ruled the sultan whom he had created, and in the name of this sultan he overruled ministries at Paris, who were, besides, occupied with other matters than colonies. When ordered to send back most of his troops and to evacuate the interior posts, he sent back the troops but kept the country loyal and did not recede at any point. Provincial fathers of families sent to replace the legionaries, he dressed to look like soldiers and used for a show of force. Many of these were architects, engineers, and master mechanics who would not have become colonists except by this accident of war. And Lyautey used them for his protectorate. And he kept Morocco peaceful by setting the natives to work, building bridges and roads and paying them wages. One of his principles was "a native hospital is worth a regiment." His policy gave the impression that the French were sure of victory even in the darkest hours of the war, and saved the protectorate for France.

The latter part of the great marshal's career was clouded by two unhappy chapters. There was his unwilling and unfortunate acceptance of the portfolio for war in the Briand ministry of 1916. He who could manage mandarins, brigands, and caïds found himself helpless amidst the rage of French factions, at the hopeless stage of the conflict, when men tried to wage war by committees. And then there was the Riffian disaster of 1925, when the whole work of Lyautey's life was in desperate danger. The story of this is told a little obscurely by Monsieur Maurois. There seems to be a great deal left out that the marshal does not wish told just now.

The last chapter is the finest and the most touching in the book. It is an intimate picture of the splendid old soldier and administrator in his retirement in a little house in Lorraine not far from his destroyed estate. The curtain falls on him planning a little French garden, he who had built twenty cities and had planned an empire. Among his books there is one with a dedication from the Princess Bibesco: "To the royalist who gave an empire to the republic."

Clarence E. Andrews is professor of English in Ohio State University. In 1919 he was a member of the Balboa Division of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace. He is the author, in addition to a number of literary and biographical studies, of "Old Morocco and the Forbidden Atlas."

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

MR. AND MRS. PENNINGTON. By FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG. *Harpers.*

A novel of modern English life which is the January selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

NEW ROADS TO PROSPERITY. By PAUL M. MAZUR. *Viking.*

A diagnosis of modern money economy with some suggestions for the betterment of economic conditions.

COLLECTED POEMS OF LAURENCE BINYON. *Macmillan.*

Two volumes of poetry by a modern poet who is in the Victorian tradition.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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Kitchen in Parnassus

MRS. SIGOURNEY: The Sweet Singer of Hartford. By GORDON HAIGHT. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by HARRY HAYDEN CLARK
The University of Wisconsin

IF Mrs. Sigourney, the "Sweet Singer of Hartford" in the eighteen fifties, is to literary critics a figure of third-rate importance, her amazing contemporary popularity, an index to the taste of the times, makes her highly interesting to the social and literary historian. Mr. Haight, a whimsically disillusioned admirer, found himself "forced to agree that posterity had judged fairly in denying her claim" as America's leading poetess, and therefore he set himself to ascertain "how she had achieved and maintained such popularity." The result is an uncommonly readable study, perhaps at times a bit too unsympathetic in its irony, distinguished for its neat union of the light touch and careful scholarship. One would scarcely suspect there were more than four hundred notes, so securely are they kennelled in the rear. The method is for the most part descriptive and biographical, the simple, moralistic, and businesslike Mrs. Sigourney appearing in the gently sarcastic light of a highly sophisticated mind. Especially interesting are the pages in which Mr. Haight deals with the educational ideals of juvenile books of the period, in which death is the goal of life and hell glares at the end of the primrose path.

Just as the Calvinistic and Federalistic Hartford Wits of Revolutionary fame contrasted with the contemporary deistic and democratic Freneau of the middle states, so Mrs. Sigourney, with her friends Percival and Goodrich, contrasts with the contemporary Knickerbockers, who described themselves as "laughing philosophers and clearly of opinion that wisdom, true wisdom, is a plump, jolly dame, who sits in her chair, laughs right merrily at the farce of life, and takes the world as it goes." Mrs. Sigourney's tastes illustrate what greater New Englanders, such as Whittier (her friend) and Longfellow, had to overcome, and explain in part their shortcomings. With a practical idealism characteristic of a Yankee, in a society guided by inherited Puritanism and by "Poor Richard," Mrs. Sigourney hitched her material hopes as a vendor of literature to a religious star. Her shrewd business sense in turning an honest penny is equalled only by her earnest sincerity and devout piety. No doubt it was natural, in a period when half of all the children born died before the age of five, and when tuberculosis caused half the deaths of adolescents, that men's thoughts should dwell on death. And no doubt the death of Mrs. Sigourney's own first three babies accounts in part for her obsession with dying infants. She began, prudently, in a small way, with a taste formed by Edward Young's graveyardism and Richardson's sentimentalism. Never was there such a demand for elegies, and Mrs. Sigourney branched out, immortalizing in funereal song everything from a stranger's starved canary to a child drowned in a barrel of swine food. "Swine food" is a characteristic periphrasis of one who fed on Young, Hannah More, and Felicia Hemans, the last of whom, to Mrs. Sigourney's literary taste, was "the most gifted poet of the age." It was the age of the albuminous gift-book and the annual, of *Keepsake, Harebell,* the *Token,* the *Glasgow Infant School Annual,* and the *Lady's Book.* No unseemly frankness should stain such virgin pages, and we find Mrs. Sigourney, daintily shunning vulgarity by rechristening a potato a "tub'rous root," pens "instruments of chirography," and sugar and butter "saccarine and oleaginous matter." The cat, "scarcely mentionable in ear polite," presented a problem; but she finally permitted him to enter the lower realms of prose as "a quadruped member of our establishment." Her "gemminess" and ingenuity in euphemism are paralleled by her feats of rhyming, as for example when she proudly cut the Gordian knot by rhyming "LaFayette" with "tears are wet." However, a market and a mastery of her medium were not enough: she needed publicity. Her courtship of the great makes reading by no means dull. To be sure, Maria Edgeworth had unaccountably objected to having her personal letters printed as advertisements, but Mrs. Sigourney was undaunted. She armed herself with "letters of introduction to all the celebrities of Great Britain. With some of them she had corresponded—that is, they had thanked her for the volume of poems she sent or refused to contribute to the 'Religious Souvenir.'" Fortunately, the great were not all as heartless as Jane Welsh Carlyle. She was presented to Louis Philippe and she saw Queen Victoria open Parliament; she returned to her proud fatherland as one who had consorted with the crowned heads of Europe.

In Mrs. Sigourney's halcyon year she turned out nine books, and Mr. Haight's complete list of her works in book form contains sixty-nine titles. "No effort," he confesses regretfully, "has been made to collect her contributions to periodicals, which would number many thousands." She published in magazines, collected, edited, and published under new titles, with the sleepless zeal of a college professor looking for a promotion. Gradually she embraced other subjects than death, cheerful subjects like reverence for age, resignation, scenes of my native land, and she even bethought her of the profane souls of sailors for whom she wrote temperance hymns. She drew upon "The Deserted Village" for "The Connecticut River" and "The Ancient Mariner" in "The Disobedient Son." The crown of her work, however, is found in such a stanza as the following from "Pocahontas":

> Forgotten race, farewell! Your haunts we tread,
> Our mighty rivers speak your words of yore,
> Our mountains wear them on their misty head,
> Our sounding cataracts hurl them to the shore;
> But on the lake your flashing oar is still,
> Hush'd is your hunter's cry on dale and hill,
> Your arrow stays the eagle's flight no more;
> And ye, like troubled shadows, sink to rest
> In unremember'd tombs, unpitied and unbless'd.

Certainly this is not measurably below much of our early American verse which is still deemed respectable, of historical importance.

How does Mr. Haight answer his original question regarding the basis of Mrs. Sigourney's fame? He finds the answer in "the character of the people for whom she wrote." They were, first, "ardent patriots," eager to find candidates for our national academy of arts. They were, second, confident "of the principle that the religious or moral note automatically placed a poem above criticism." They were, third, worshippers of respectability and material success, who admired the small-town girl who made good in a big way.

Mr. Haight finds Mrs. Sigourney's decline in fame due to "the changing taste of the public." It would indeed be interesting to speculate upon the extent to which the ideals which Mrs. Sigourney represents have motivated a curiously divergent extremism in American literary history. To what extent did the extreme moralism which she represents cause Poe's extreme estheticism? To what extent did the smug artificiality and gemminess of her school cause Whitman to rebel in the direction of vitalistic bluntness and inclusive animalism? If the problem before American poets is the uniting of extremes, of tendencies illustrated by Poe and Whitman, the work of Robert Frost would seem to be a happy augury for the future.

ETCHING BY THOMAS HANDFORTH. FROM "FINE PRINTS OF THE YEAR" (MINTON, BALCH).

A Colorful Land

A NATURALIST IN BRAZIL. The Record of a Year's Observation of Her Flora, Her Fauna and Her People. By KONRAD GUENTHER. Houghton Mifflin Co. 1931. $5.

Reviewed by NORMAN TAYLOR

BOOKS about places you have never seen either make you want to see them or at least make you want to meet the author. Doctor Guenther, in a field covered by many other writers, has done even more than this. Less informative than Oakenfull's "Brazil," less romantic than W. H. Hudson, he combines the enthusiasm and wonder of Tomlinson with the trained observations of a naturalist.

And Brazil always excites enthusiasm and wonder, not only among naturalists, but among more casual visitors. Guenther, knowing this, has made an intelligent compromise between pure natural science on the one hand and the history of common everyday things in Brazil on the other.

Both fields are crowded with an incredibly colorful life. Forests, birds, insects, and animals seem to dwarf man in a country that still contains the greatest rain-forests in the world. But this kaleidoscope of Nature is matched by the tangled skeins of the modern Brazilian, with his dilution of Indian, Portuguese, French, Dutch, and Negro blood. Nowhere is this natural and racial complexity so colorful as in Pernambuco, where the author began his work in a monastery garden of Olinda.

To anyone who has loitered along that incomparable Brazilian coast, Guenther's book is a joy. He makes Bahia, Recife, Maceio, and Rio de Janeiro places of magic and enchantment. That some of them are sinks of iniquity he does not tell us, and with admirable restraint he says nothing about the only church that tries to combat these evils. That may seem strange to those who would love to scent religious propaganda from the fact that the author was a guest at many monasteries, and dedicates his book to three Benedictine abbots.

To the color of life in Brazil, its scenery, cities, and customs Guenther devotes, formally, only three chapters. The other seventeen are on different phases of natural history. But intertwined with them are the observations of a sympathetic critic with a singularly keen appreciation of the beauty of the Brazilian scene. That beauty is matchless in Rio, in Victoria, and in countless places of rural simplicity in the interior. For the general reader his book will be a revelation. It is handsomely illustrated not only with views but with many small and quite fascinating sketches of plant and animal life.

Having been invited by the government of Pernambuco to combat a plague of insects, Doctor Guenther naturally has a good deal to say about insect life in Brazil. The species are legion, ranging from the gorgeous Morpho butterflies to almost microscopic, and often dangerous parasites. What insects mean in sheer bulk may be gauged from the fact that he cites one plague of locusts sixty miles long and twelve wide.

Life histories of insects, birds, frogs, and salamanders are told with a wealth of detail, many illuminating little sketches, and a good deal of sound observation. This makes the book interesting not only to the amateur and professional naturalist, but to all who want to know what happens to the myriad creatures that swarm everywhere about Brazil. Their stories are often dramatic, sometimes gruesome, and downright funny at times. The pageantry of insect life and flower pollination is so enchanting that Guenther devotes many pages to it.

Professional botanists will carp a little at some of the author's statements on forests and plant life. He did not visit the forests of the Amazon, and seems to have ignored rainfall as a factor in producing them. And many of his plant names and identities will bother the specialist on the Brazilian flora. But such matters need not bother the general reader very much. For most general readers will be sure to thank the author for writing an extremely readable story about a region that teems with interest. And for the student he has provided a unique index; part page-finder, part explanatory, and some of it bibliographic references.

Germinal Thought

HISTORY OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY. By BENJAMIN APTHORP GOULD FULLER. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1931. 3 vols. $10.

Reviewed by HARRY T. COSTELLO

TO produce a three-volume history of Greek philosophy is something to be expected from a German, but not from an American. To write it without triviality, and yet in a style that would be approved of by "mahitabel the cat," whose motto was "toujours gai," is to do something only an American would have attempted, and is a phenomenon which maybe the Germans and even our sober English cousins will find disturbing. It is hard to write about Aristotle with lightness of touch, and yet with seriousness of intent, showing familiarity with many of the controversies of scholars, without becoming entangled in their doubts and subtleties. To have done this is something of a feat, and that feat Dr. Fuller has accomplished. And the style in which he has written it, if not a miracle of prose, is mostly very good and clear, with attractive illustrative similes, and an occasional neat epigram.

The first volume is here a reprint, for it was first published back in 1923. It was then recognized as an excellent sketch of Greek philosophy before Socrates, particularly good for its well-drawn background of Greek life. But it had then, and since has had, many rivals, for the period has been often written up. Of these rivals, Gomperz covers the whole period of Fuller's complete work, but the first volume is none too well translated; while Burnet's "Early Greek Philosophy" is probably superior to anything else in English. The two volumes now added, which take the story through the Sophists, Socrates,

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Plato, Aristotle, do not replace for scholars such works as A. E. Taylor's on Plato, or Ross on Aristotle, or the still more elaborate monographs and editions that lie behind them. But Dr. Fuller has carefully worked his volumes into shape, while holding a professorship and research position at the University of Cincinnati, and given them a finish and satisfying quality on the whole superior to the first volume. The complete work has become, therefore, about the best thing we have for the thoughtful non-specialist reader.

Dr. Fuller has given us something big enough in scope to do justice to great names and great thoughts, and in addition intelligible, readable, intelligent. Whether we turn to the account of Plato's Ideas, or Aristotle on Form and Matter—and these are tests of any man's powers of exposition—we are made to feel that we are moving in regions a bit alien to modern modes of thought, yet not so much so, but what we may come to seem at home in them. Dr. Fuller's task is one of popularization, but he is not untrue to the originals. In territories much debated, he adds a touch of originality himself. So his big work is worth anybody's while, who is fortunate enough to have a little time to spare for reviewing the germinal thought from which comes so much of modern culture.

Harry T. Costello is Brownell Professor of Philosophy at Trinity College, Hartford. He is the author of "Books for a College Student's Reading."

Frances to Grimke

THE DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY. Edited by ALLEN JOHNSON and DUMAS MALONE. Volume VII: Fraunces-Grimke. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. $12.50.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

THE seventh volume of this notable enterprise presents less than the usual number of outstanding figures. There are two influential editors, Horace Greeley and E. L. Godkin; two soldier-Presidents, Garfield and Grant; a great inventor, Robert Fulton, and a memorable explorer, Frémont; two vivid agitators, William Lloyd Garrison and Henry George; two statesmen of secondary or tertiary rank, Albert Gallatin and Elbridge Gerry; and two figures inseparably connected with the Panama Canal, George W. Goethals and William C. Gorgas. Certainly one other name ought to be added to this list—Josiah Willard Gibbs, who in any true evaluation of greatness surpassed most of the men we have named. It would be gracious also to include two ripe scholars of engaging personality, Basil L. Gildersleeve and H. H. Furness. A single patronymic, Green or Greene, fills nearly fifty pages, without yielding more than one name of high eminence, Gen. Nathanael Greene. But if the volume is not so rich in genius or character as some which have preceded it, it is not the less interesting or informative. For obvious reasons, the greatest novelty continues to inhere in the treatment of minor personages.

Readers of the Dictionary have a right to expect from the sketches of the major figures not only an accurate and comprehensive statement of the facts, but a detached and scrupulous estimate of the man and his work; and from the sketches of lesser figures—who often have never had a real biography—some original research. They have a right to expect from the editors a discriminating apportionment of space, and a minute attention to correctness. Usually the reader finds all of this, but by no means invariably.

It would be hard to produce better brief essays than are here given to Willard Gibbs by Edwin B. Wilson, to Garfield—rightly treated as a great parliamentarian—by F. L. Paxson, and to Elbridge Gerry, with many original facts drawn from manuscript sources, by Samuel E. Morison. They are fresh, subtle, and spirited. The level is naturally not always so well maintained. For some reason a disproportionate part of the account of Henry George is given to his career before 1869, when he seized upon the single-tax idea; and because of the subsequent compression the brilliant fascination of the man is not clearly indicated, some of his ideas, such as his intense hostility to protective tariffs, are not mentioned, and the full significance of his mayoralty campaign in 1886 is not brought out. The estimate of E. L. Godkin, while expert, is too appreciative, and fails to define his marked limitations of intellect and sympathy. A note of eulogy is also struck too sharply in other sketches; for example, in the dubious statement that Gallatin's intellectual powers quite equalled those of Jefferson, Hamilton, Adams, or Webster. It is refreshing to find the more balanced estimate that Claude M. Fuess gives of William Lloyd Garrison. He frankly confesses his hesitation between the view that Garrison was a high-minded idealist of heroic accomplishments, and the view that he was an impractical fanatic who did some good in a most disagreeable way. It was evidently an error of editorial judgment to divide the sketch of Grant into two sections, one military and one political. Something may be gained in expertness of detail, but more is lost in the bisection of a personality. Another error of judgment appears in the allotment to Basil L. Gildersleeve of seven columns, and to H. H. Furness of only one. The account of Gildersleeve by Francis G. Allinson is rich in feeling for character and scholarship, clear-cut in its portraiture, and not a line is to be spared; but Furness deserved more.

As always, the short sketches abound in arresting, informing, and amusing matter. There is George M. Gould, for example, the brusque Philadelphia physician who first traced the effects of eye-strain on general health and took Lafcadio Hearn into his house to reform his erratic and erotic character. There is Louis M. Gottschalk, born in Louisiana, who gave concerts in France with Berlioz, impressed half of Europe, refused an offer of $20,000 a year and expenses from Barnum, toured South America, and died in Rio Janeiro. There is John W. Goff, who as a young man hired a New Bedford whaler to rescue Irish Fenians, and as an old man tried Gyp the Blood and Police-Lieut. Becker. There is John B. Gough, who had delirium tremens at twenty-five, and before his death had delivered 9,600 temperance lectures to nine million people. There is the wild romance of Stephen Brellet's life—victim of the French Revolution, South American merchant, Philadelphia Quaker, anti-slavery agitator in the South, prison reformer in England, who lectured Alexander I of Russia and the Pope on social amelioration, and induced British capitalists to spend large sums in aiding the Haitians. There is Bernhard Gillam, the English-born caricaturist who died at thirty-nine, but not before his "tattoed man" had helped to defeat Blaine for the presidency; A. G. Greene, the jurist and book-collector who wrote "Old Grimes is dead"; and many more. Not a few sketches show research into family papers.

Under Dr. Malone the editorial work is as carefully done as it was under Dr. Allen Johnson. The one serious question raised by the Dictionary thus far is whether the exclusion of minor political figures is not being carried too far. Among the names omitted from the first volumes are John Quincy Adams, Jr.; "Private" John Allen, the well known House humorist; James B. Beck of Kentucky, who served in House and Senate from 1867 to 1890; and William H. Barnum, Connecticut Senator and Democratic National Chairman from 1876 to 1889. All these should have been included. In the present volume we miss the names of Louis A. Frothingham, soldier in two wars, Harvard overseer, lieutenant-governor of Massachusetts, and member of four Congresses; Benjamin F. Funk, leading Illinois agriculturist and Congressman; Augustus P. Gardner, son-in-law of Henry Cabot Lodge, World War soldier, and member of eight Congresses; and Calvin Goddard, a Federalist Congressman of Hartford Convention fame.

THE MEN WHO MAKE OUR HISTORY
RECAPTIONED FROM THE PULITZER PRIZE CARTOON BY ROLLIN KIRBY.

Nebular Hypothesis

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

BEHOLD in heaven how glories gather
Beyond such heaven as hoops our thought,
When rapt imagination's pinion
Out-towers eagles, finds dominion
In void unstirred of any feather,
In the unutterable naught!

There not in air and not in æther
The unwearying and luminous wing
Is buoyed beyond the suns' far seething
On an eternal even breathing
Of one vast spirit,—and the Breather
An unimaginable thing.

Thither, ingathered by the Dreamer,
All dreams in color or line or form
Returning through that diamond weather
Architectonic flash together
To scheme, past any terrene schemer,
Brilliant as music, blind as storm.

Uprushing raptures of creation
Valved with all pulsing joy and pain
Wrought to a world of marvelous motion
Like a great berg afloat on ocean
In dazzled light, by subtle suasion
Of an incalculable brain.

O there belovèd, all loved, forever
As light you are, in light you move;
Pride of the father, tears of the mother,
Silver sister and golden brother,—
The glowing mind of all endeavor,
The full irradiancy of love!

No atom of all beauty, gathered
From earth the mote that shows the main,
From striding mountain to trivial flower,
Escapes the animating power

Whereby the furthest stars were fathered,
The sand regathered grain by grain.

All the incredible forms of matter:
Flowers so delicate, frail and small;
Miraculous leaves and awesome grasses,
Almsgiving grain wherethrough there passes
The rippling breeze more strange than water
Lake-tranced or wild in waterfall;

All lovely color in the sun-dance
Pervading skies; the vivid hues
Or fainter tints of all creation
From flower to beast; a revelation
Of inexhaustible abundance,
Delighted tidings and bright news;

The beauty of the body of woman,
The wave's curve and the vase's slope;
Sculpture of thew in athletes girded;
The grace, the fury of wild things herded
In strength and speed to shame the human,
Maned lion, arrowy antelope;

The vast fantastical in nature
From tiniest antennaed things
To shag gorilla's booming thunder,
To rainbow fishes' stare of wonder,
Or pied giraffe surprised to stature
Or scale-legged ostrich scant of wings;

All wizarded emerging issue
Of wilder primal dreaming wrought;
The atom with whole Babylons teeming,
The floating cell of Solomon dreaming,
Unriddled plasm assuming tissue,
Blind tissue weirdly taking thought;

All these are in their time retaken,
All these the imagination sees
More strangely found than lost; and, seeing,
Hovers a-wing to scan the being
Of Man, whose powers but just awaken
Nursed through the glimmering centuries;

All these the glories building glory
In Man's so curious mind and young,
Natheless whose life is one long daring
Toward light, forever light forswearing,
Till only madmen seize the story
With coals of fire upon their tongue,

And, hearing all Man's many voices
From continent to continent,
Crying on love, in anger crying
From birth, through life, and choked in dying,—
Lost in a maze of infinite choices,
Ash on his head and raiment rent,—

Upleaning by that tower of babel
Storied of every age gone by,
And harking him in every nation
Raising his paean of exultation
Or bitter wailing,—these are able
At last of Man to prophesy

No loss of aught that forms that tidal
Antiphony of joy and pain,
No loss of aught he sees as beauty
Or fiery-lighted fearful duty,
No dissolution, but a bridal
Wherein forever all remain

Dissolved, resolved, re-formed, uplifted
To scheme where is no small or great,
But wonder past his measure of wonder
In apparition and still thunder,
In dream wherethrough the æons have drifted
Like mere ephemerids of fate.

Though only with his eyes and vision
Man sees, in his own terms alone,
Such power in him and through all matter
Moves that, as Christ walked on the water,
A spirit thieves his thought's derision,
Whose lightening can dissolve the stone,

Whose energy shall gather wailing
At last into eternal light
Where every atom finds its station
As in a dream's transfiguration,
Like music on the dark prevailing,
Like throngs of towers, height on height,

That burn as cloud, fulfilled of voices,—
Like love that meets with tears that stream
Lost love,—like all miraculous changes
Through which, even now, our planet ranges,—
For thus his intricate art rejoices
The marvelous Dreamer of the Dream!

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The BOWLING GREEN

Nation Wide

II. THE PEKINESE

Richard Roe of 50 West 81 Street, manufacturer of stationery novelties with an office in the Flatiron Building, was taken ill on a Lackawanna Railroad ferryboat last night and died before the boat reached Hoboken. A heart attack was said to be the cause.—News item.

LUCILLE ROE and her sister Hazel (Mrs. Herman Schmaltz) were agreed that it was inconsiderate of Richard to die on a ferryboat; and going toward Hoboken, too, which would take some explaining. Hazel tried to console Mrs. Roe. A great many very nice people pass through Hoboken, she said; they go under cover from the ferry into the Lackawanna train and are on their way, unsullied, to Montclair and the Oranges. All very well, thought Lucille, but the notice in the paper only mentioned Hoboken. Besides what for was he on a ferryboat at all? To this question nothing on Richard's person gave any clue, and we shall have to wait long for the answer. In the inside pocket of his overcoat was a small packet of cinnamon gum, such as he always chewed vigorously on the way home when he had had a cocktail. But it had not been opened and there was no flavor of liquor on his cold lips. Curiously enough it was this that burst Lucille into tears. Poor darling, I wish he'd had a drink to die with.

The gloomy dimness of the Lackawanna terminal at night, when she finally got over there, and the appalling rigidity of Richard Roe (usually so flexible) on the stationmaster's couch, were a displeasing memory. It was not put into words (that is the task of this narrative) but the feeling was that a man of any decency takes care to die in bed at home. If one insisted on dying, surely the apartment was a pleasant place for it? Doctors, nurses, and telling the switchboard not to put through any calls, give death a certain dignity. For one awful moment the poor soul had wondered if there weren't any way by which they could pretend Richard was alive, just prop him up somehow, until they got him back to 81st Street, into the elevator and past the hall-boys? Suddenly Lucille was almost aware of the hellish exposure of life in New York where you can't even be born or die without elevator boys knowing about it.

However, that was all over now. Richard had seemed to find it dignified enough. It wasn't as bad as it might have been (they took him up in the baggage elevator) and the details were smoothly accomplished. When Richard's eyes were closed it was better: he seemed to go to sleep then and lose that disquieting look of surprise—not an unpleasant surprise, really; more as though he had suddenly learned that it's all much simpler than we suppose. A pity we have to die to realize that life is really quite simple. And the increased sympathetic deference of the elevator boys during succeeding days was rather flattering. It didn't take long to purge the apartment of Richard. Clothes to the unemployed. Never until then did it occur to Lucille that those fellows who hang about uptown subway exits carrying men's suits on their arms are perhaps buying clothes of people who have died. But really you can't get very sentimental about men's garments; and Gladys had long been complaining she didn't have enough closet space for her dresses.

Herman had been very kind, and during the first few evenings came round at ten o'clock to take the Pekinese for his comfort stroll. It did not look well, Mr. Schmaltz thought, for the widow or the daughter to take the dog out during the first days of bereavement. Lucille would have welcomed a little fresh air, but remembered the elevator boys. It's because they're so black, thought Herman, they have such a respect for death. When black people die they seem to die more completely than anyone else. Herman had not entirely abandoned his sense of humor; indeed he and Hazel were often both amused by the same thing simultaneously, which is one of life's triumphs. The period of mourning would have been easier for Peke if Herman had known exactly the route Peke and Richard had taken together so many evenings. The railing round the Museum of History is traditional in all that neighborhood, but Herman, more selfish, liked to look at the shop windows on Columbus Avenue, where Peke was agitated by the sudden thunders of the L.

New York is the most anonymous of cities. Is that the word we want? I mean it shows no traces; like Peke it doesn't retain well. Even the very great leave few marks on it, personal marks. Apartment houses show no sign of who may have lived there. As soon as any building begins to accumulate rich human flavor they tear it down, or sterilize it into offices. Perhaps it is superb to have a city in which the mood is all brittle Now, unmitigated by disturbing suggestions of the past. The L is one of New York's few genuine antiquities: those grim old trestles, the Swiss chalets of stations, the Gothic rolling stock. Yet even in New York, city of no memories, it was extraordinary that Richard Roe could have left so little physical spoor. He was so elusive that no God or Recording Angel could ever have tracked him; only people as humble and absurd as himself. If it hadn't been for Peke there might hardly have been any trace at all. Some scratches against a certain lamp-post where he always knocked out his pipe when he and Peke walked together, and a few patches of oxidized iron railing, are all I can be sure of as memorial of the pair. It was only on those evening walks that he smoked a pipe. He broke himself of the habit long ago: Gladys couldn't endure the smell of it, and believed it kept her young men from calling. Thousands of times he walked round outside the Museum of Natural History, filled with sincere respect for the marvels it contains. How little he guessed that he himself was more interesting and more enigmatic than its rarest specimen. He carried no identifying baggage through life. Furniture, books, bric-a-brac? These were Lucille's province. They bought nothing that might not be duplicated at the nearest department store. I hope a few merchandizing managers offer up grateful orisons for the Roes and Schmaltzes when they say their evening prayers. When telephones began to be dressed in petticoats, Lucille and Hazel were delighted. Richard, though, was always a little shocked; he was relieved when the phone went biped years later. But he never offered any resistance to the heavy battalions of Mode. Like the Chinese, he did not even know he was invaded and conquered. For him the great wheels of commerce revolved, statesmen and parsons flung their arms, artisans reeked in excavations. Uniform soaps, tires, magazines, music, bedsteads, cellophane, came trundling forth. Satirists smile at his simplicity. Perhaps after all he was wise in his generation. He had the naive eye of the instinctive artist who does not even see the irrelevant, reserving his strength for the crisis. Great commanders do not engage their troops on a side issue. The tricks of Taste can be taught to almost any clever rascal. He did not even know they existed. He accepted what came.

Once he heard a speech in Congress, from the Visitors' Gallery—some deplorable rhodomontade with a ludicrous Star-Spangled peroration. He was moved; he tingled and applauded. But what else would you have him do? In France he would have been a good Frenchman, in Turkey a good Turk, in an anthill a good ant.

Exceptions will be taken and admitted, as they appear.

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So there he is, going outside the Museum with Peke, who imagined himself shrewder than he really was and had a notion that his host was not really of much consequence; chiefly because when they halted Richard sometimes fell into a muse and had to be tugged on. God would have been uncertain which of them was really on the leash. And a Pekinese is only a very small micturating mandarin on four legs, subject to numerous snobbish fallacies. But they did not usually stay out very long, for sometimes Lucille thought that the leash (which hung in the hall cupboard, with Peke's winter waistcoat) was merely an excuse for Richard to go out and walk. She and Gladys would have been horrified if they had known that on that last night, when Richard really felt a necessity of furious walking, faster than Peke could manage, he picked up the small creature and strode all the way down to the end of the pier at 79th Street and Riverside. It is a thrilling place at night. Behind is the great barrier reef of apartment houses against which monthly rentals dash themselves in vain. The river hisses under the piles, the lights of the great Washington Bridge make their exquisite curve. There was a bitter wind across the Hudson that night, and even underneath Richard's overcoat Peke caught cold. His big huckleberry eyes watered for days, and they all thought it was so touching, he was weeping for his master.

Lucille did not like Richard to stay out alone very long because in some obscure way she feared he might be thinking. This was wise of her, for she observed as he grew older that thinking was his chief danger. There was the grotesque matter, for instance, that came out later, of his leaving the business to the employees. She counted on Peke, not without reason, to stand between Richard and the evil spirits; as medieval bishops put small gargoyles on their cathedrals. She was more at ease if she knew he had gone to a modest clubhouse where Upper West Side husbands grown too mature for discipline sped the hours with billiards and bridge. There they had lockers, and heads of moose, the symbolic emblems of American manhood, and Lucille innocently supposed that these were complete consolation. It is true that Richard kept a bottle of Scotch in his locker, but he rarely uncorked it: after his death it was found almost full, and according to club custom the House Committee drank it to his memory.

You will be patient with this narrative, I hope, because your collaboration is necessary in this intricate affair. Do you remember Walt Whitman crying out one time:

> When I read the book, the biography famous,
> And is this then (said I) what the author calls a man's life?

Walt was disgusted with the illicit sentimentalism, the false magnanimity, of historians. Clumsy and faltering as this must be, it is not written for anyone except Richard Roe himself. Exempt now from his besetting unselfishness, he must be able to recognize it. I begin with the fact of his death and proceed backward because it was in that sequence that I first learned about him. I move from necessarily false impressions to those at least less false, for he must grow in your mind as he did in mine. I fear he will seem at first merely like a sculptor's armature on which the clay is to be kneaded. There is plenty of clay.

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It was an easy matter to clean up after Richard's death. Nothing had ever improved his standing like being dead: both Lucille and Gladys, and even Hazel by sympathetic proximity, wept luxuriously. At any rate Hazel was moist with tears, though some of them were Lucille's.

It was only by chance that the biographer happened to see the note in the newspaper. He had arrived at that time of life when a man often looks over the obits because almost anyone he knows is likely to be dead at any moment. He waited for a discreet interval and then managed a letter of introduction from George Work to Mrs. Roe. This was a mistake. The widow considered that Richard's cronies, Mr. Work, Mr. Vogelsang, Mr. Von Ulm and the others, had been a bad influence on Richard. Consequently she was doubtful from the start. "I can't imagine," she said bitterly, "why you should be so prejudiced against my husband that you want to write a book about him." Is base subterfuge permissible in the honorable pursuit of truth? It was only by getting George Work to convey to Mrs. Roe—through Herman Schmaltz and without dangerously explicit statement—the idea that the biographer had long cherished a secret illicit adoration for her, which now at last he felt free to admit, that her hostility was appeased. I hope that publishers in arranging terms for a book make some allowance for the cost-accounting of the author? It was a boon to several uptown florists when the biographer began calling on Mrs. Roe. Eventually he was allowed to take Peke for an occasional evening stroll and do errands to the delicatessen. His desire to see the room which had been Richard's was thought a trifle morbid; but by that time Gladys had moved into it. It had already a strong bouquet of Lebanon cedar, the favored aroma of American virginity. Except for a photograph, firmly encaged in silver on Mrs. Roe's dressing table, and a few forgotten cigar ashes now covered by cigarette stubs in the shank of an untippable scarlet smoking-stand, there were no evidences in that apartment of Richard Roe. Yet the biographer never rose past the figure 8 in the elevator shaft without a twinge of recognition that that number had meant home. What had Richard thought when he saw it?

Mrs. Roe was a very remarkable woman, and the admiration that began by policy became genuine enough. There were even moments when the student feared that for the full prosecution of his research he would have to make the supreme sacrifice and marry her. But a biographer may be pardoned for feeling the importance of life, even of his own life, and he was always prudent. The idea of serving indeterminate sentence as father-in-law of the kind of young men whom Gladys enjoyed was enough to restore caution.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The recent presentation of one of last year's prize-winning plays at Cornell University serves to call attention to the fact that the prize offer of last year is renewed for the current year. Three prizes are offered in a play writing contest consisting of a first prize of $75, second prize of $30, and a third prize of $15 for the best one-act plays with a rural setting. These prizes are offered through Kermis, student dramatic organization of the New York state colleges of agriculture and home economics, and are made available through the generosity of Mr. Henry Morgenthau, Jr. The contest is open to writers anywhere, either in the United States or abroad. Last year, the first prize was won by a Canadian. The plays are to deal sympathetically with some phase of country life and they may be tragedy, drama, comedy, or farce. In awarding the prizes, dramatic construction, intimate knowledge of country life, accurate observation, and an interpretation of the country-side and of rural persons will be considered. The plays shall be original, in one act, and to occupy from thirty to forty minutes in presentation. Manuscripts should preferably be typewritten but, if not typewritten, must be written in ink on one side of the paper only, on sheets approximately 8″ x 10″ in size.

A rare first edition of the first part of Thomas Hardy's "Dynasts" has been found in a Charing Cross Road book "dump," from which about two tons of worthless books are sent every week to be pulped.

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Round About Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN reading the poems of Laurence Binyon (*Collected Poems of Laurence Binyon.* Two Volumes. The Macmillan Company) one feels as though one were perusing one of the lesser Victorians. This is not so strange when one considers that the earliest lyrics by this poet covered the decade 1887-1897. Now, though Binyon is presumably still writing, the two volumes of his collected works probably contain all the verse of any importance that he is likely to give the world. He seems to me to stem from Matthew Arnold. The reflective quality of his lyrics, his observation of London sights and sounds, his pastoral description, his handling of narrative and translation, somehow suggest the elder master. His is not Arnold's idiom, but his is the same freedom of versification in classical mold. And his insight into life, though something happier than Arnold's —and far from being, at the same time, so impressive—is in the same way troubled. He would seem to have little to do with our world of today, with art struggling to adapt itself to the insensate demands of a chaotic age not yet actually susceptible of interpretation. This voice from the past, as it is essentially, must seem to us hurrying moderns a little languid, a little remote. And again, Binyon has never in his lyrics achieved the felicity that, in a few lyrical utterances, was that of Robert Bridges. Yet he covers the same span. And he lived through and wrote through the Great War, and many poems after. Indeed, in one poem, "For the Fallen," he created, in traditional mood, one of the noblest exequies written in England. The verse is simple and direct, but the following excerpt from it will give an idea of its high quality:

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

Nor was his attitude, though he sang heroism traditionally, untouched by proper horror of the cold, inhuman, mechanistic aspect of modern warfare. He could sing in "Guns at the Front,"

Serving death, destruction, and things inert,—
He the soarer, free of heavens to roam in,
He whose heart has a world of light to home in,
Confounding day with darkness, flesh with dirt.

Oh, dear indeed the cause that so can prove him,
Pitilessly self-tested! If no cause beaconed
Beyond this chaos, better he bled unreckoned,
With his own monsters bellowing madness above him.

For to the poet the guns in France roared "aloud with hideous vastness,/ *Nothing, Nothing, Nothing!*" Binyon was one of those who fetched the wounded near the front and saw the horror close. He saw how "All the hells are awake: the old serpents hiss/From dungeons of the mind;/Fury of hate born of the blind,/ Madness of lust, despairs and treacheries unclean;/They shudder up from man's most dark abyss." A quiet scholar, a curator of prints in the British Museum, one whose best single poem is probably that concerning King Amasis and King Polycrates, whose best lyrics are of simple joys and sorrows, whose narratives are of such as Niobe and Porphyrion, it was not to be expected that he could seize in poetry the upheaving changes the war brought, though in "The New World," written to the people of the United States at the time that American troops first marched through London, in the "Terrible year of the nations' trampling feet" (as he shapes the line), he foresaw how

The old world breaks
Its mould, and life runs fierce and fluid, a stream
That floods, dissolves, re-makes.
Each pregnant moment charged to its extreme,
Quickens unending future, and all's vain
But the onward mind, that dares the oncoming years
And takes their storm, a master.

But I have dwelt on but a small section in one of these two volumes. In the first volume, the Lyrics, we find that Binyon is always a dignified and sincere subjective poet. As will have been perceived, his prosody is thoroughly competent; and his use of poetic *cliché* is astonishingly rare when one considers that he seems to remain quite untouched by any of the later shifts of attitude toward poetry or the experimentation that began just before the war to indicate new trends, new methods, and to result in the contemporary phenomena we now see about us. It is not in the longer ode forms, I think, that one finds Binyon at his best in this first volume. Consider the long invocation to "The Mirror," midway of that book, which contains some moving passages but persists too long. Directly after it, the four-verse poem "To Time" more positively arrests us. It begins

Time, Time who choosest
All in the end well;
Who severely refusest
Fames upon trumpets blown
Loud for a day, and alone
Makest truth to excel:

which has a great accent. And the turn at the end of the poem, even though the workmanship does not quite satisfy, is equally notable:

Beauty is throned at last;
Truth rings falsehood's knell;
But our strength, our joy is past
While our hearts wait thee:
Time, Time, I hate thee,
Hate thee, and rebel.

Even though the second line of this verse is plainly bad, the management of idea in the whole poem is striking. Binyon can often express a mood with beautiful clarity, if not, it seems ever, with the truly magical epithet. His well-known and poignant "O World, Be Nobler," in seven lines, is a case in point. And his other love poems often embody individual insights. "As I walked through London" is rather something many of us must have experienced with the "fresh wound burning," but the epigrammatic "Not Even Love" is the type of emotional expression that seems to belong to one person and yet to echo in one's own experience:

But not to have sinned, in Nature's eyes
I find a brittle plea to trust:
She punishes the just unwise
More hardly than the wise unjust.

And another lyric question whether "in some tranquil hour/When fortified, the heart is capable at ease/Of sorrow," the despair when "the sword struck first" was easier to bear than the present mood:

Is this still woe forlorn
Less than that fierce despair?
Perhaps 'tis worse to bear
Because 'tis easier borne.

Those who seek in poetry for communication of human experience, giving food for thought, will discover it in Binyon. His intimate poems spread ripples. "Adversaries" may be cited as a comment on the nature of man anything but shallow. His observation of nature is suffused with human warmth. Take the pages containing two different manifestations of this, "Wind at Midnight" and "The Poplar," the latter standing alone "like windless fire."

In "London Visions," the poem "The Little Dancers" has ere this been praised by others. But Binyon's insight is better displayed to our mind in "The Destroyer," though the last line of "The Little Dancers" "Their eyes shining, grave with a perfect pleasure" is in itself perfect. "The Storm" is inspired description. And the deep human understanding displayed in "The Escape," "The Convict," and "Martha" make us overlook a certain heaviness of traditional manner that weights them. They may have been written in the 'nineties. Their manner distinctly dates. But the characteristics of the people remain with us, as does the poet's vision of the defeated and dispossessed of a great city, enduring like statues. I have discussed what I think is Binyon's chief contribution to poetry. His narratives have certain fine lines, and always his flexible verse has music. He has, on the other hand, written with what is very nearly a fatal facility. Yet a little, I think, will endure. As for his translations from Dante at the end of the second volume, the following will illustrate the fine manner of it:

Rumble of thunder upon my brain deep-drowsed
So shook the sleep that at the heavy sound
I started, like a man by force aroused.
And my now rested eyes casting around
I rose upright, with peering gaze intent
To know the place wherein myself I found.
True it is, I stood on the edge of the descent
Where the hollow of the gulf out of despair
Amasses thunder of infinite lament.

❧ ❧

Books received to which we cannot devote space in this column: *Sparks from the Anvil,* by Clara Lundie Askew, Banner Press, Emory University, Georgia; *Swift Water,* by Clifford Allen, Poetry Publishers, Philadelphia, Pa.; *Emmaus, A Book of Poems,* by Raymond Kresendky, The Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; *He Who Rides the Sky,* by Eliot Kays Stone, Poetry Publishers, Philadelphia, Pa.; *Horizon Frames,* by Tom Sweeney, Poetry Publishers, Philadelphia, Pa.; *Candles in the Night,* by Amy Crocked Leighton, Boston: May & Company; *Songs and Imitations,* by Thomas D. Vaughan, Boston: Richard G. Badger; *Just a Letter and Other Poems,* by William Ambrose Henderson, Boston: May & Company; *Columbia Poetry* 1931, New York: Columbia University Press; *Father:* An Anthology of Verse, by Margery Doud and Cleo M. Parsley, E. P. Dutton & Co.

Indian Life

DANCING GODS, INDIAN CEREMONIALS OF NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA. By ERNA FERGUSSON. Knopf. 1931.

EVERYBODY familiar with the Southwest knows of the friendly relations existing between the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona and the members of the various artist colonies of that colorful region. Missionaries, Babbitts, and tourists have all felt the weight of the artist's hand in defending the liberty of conscience and the ancient culture of the natives there. That alliance came about through no theory or pose, but naturally, for the simple reason that artists understand and like artists. This book by Erna Fergusson is the natural fruit of that deep understanding.

As the title indicates, the author has attempted a popular account of the principal Indian dances of New Mexico and Arizona, based upon the soundest available sources published and unpublished, and upon a first-hand knowledge of the ceremonies themselves. The book covers an extensive field, dealing as it does with the principal festivals of the Pueblos, Navajos, and Apaches, and presenting colorful pictures of more than twenty tribal rituals. The list includes all of the better known dances such as the Corn Dance, the Snake Dance, the Fire Dance, and many others which are little known to white men.

These dances of the Pueblos have been long established as fixtures in the program for the traveler on the desert, and though few white persons can have witnessed all of the ceremonials discussed in the book, it is highly desirable that more of them should be appreciated and seen. "Dancing Gods" makes the reader keen to have a first-hand experience of these unspoiled spectacles, for no book, however adequately written, can quite satisfy. It is therefore greatly to be regretted that the author has omitted what might easily have been supplied, to wit, a calendar of southwestern dances together with brief instructions as to routes and means of transportation. Though not a guide book, "Dancing Gods" would be none the worse for such an appendix. These Indians are now in no danger of having their dances suppressed or unduly commercialized, and the American public should not be hindered from seeing them as it has been hindered from seeing the equally colorful and dramatic Sun Dance of the tribes of the Southern Plains.

The author shows an intimate knowledge of the Indian life, and a ready sympathy for Indian thought and feeling. The book is packed with diverting and even moving incidents, and the reader gains much insight into the world out of which these strange and striking rituals grew. The illustrations are all reproductions of paintings by a baker's dozen of the leading painters and illustrators of the Southwest. These, admirable and accurate as they are, add greatly to the pleasure of reading the book. It is admirably planned to serve as an introduction to the curiously conventional abandon of Indian life and the great sun-washed stretches of southwestern country.

A movement has been started to establish a Joyce Kilmer Memorial Wing in the proposed new building of Good Samaritan Hospital at Suffern, N. Y. This institution has served the people of the vicinity and of the metropolitan district ever since it was founded in 1902 by the late Mrs. Thomas Fortune Ryan. The idea of a Kilmer Memorial in the proposed new building, construction of which is planned to start in the spring, occurred to a number of people in New York City, Mahwah, and Suffern who knew Joyce Kilmer when he was a resident of this community and who now revere his memory. Kilmer, himself, had a great regard for the hospital. He was treated here when he met with an accident in 1916, a year before he sailed with the Rainbow Division to France. A number of his noteworthy letters were written from the hospital during his convalescence. The Joyce Kilmer Memorial Committee has been formed to sponsor a mail appeal to various groups, such as Legion posts, literary societies, schools, and other groups for the erection of the memorial wing.

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A Letter from Switzerland

By RENÉ RAPIN

BEFORE the new books come out, before the end of the year brings forth once more the novels, devotional works, books on the Alps and on local history, the staple product of the Swiss printing press at Christmastide, it might be well to look back upon some of the few worth-while books published here in the last twelve months or so.

Ramuz, French Switzerland's greatest writer, has not published any work since his 1928 "Beauté sur la Terre" (English translation, "Beauty on Earth," published in 1929 by Putnam). Jakob Schaffner, his German-Swiss rival, has been more active, his latest work being "Die Jünglingszeit des Johannes Schattenhold" (U. V. D., Stuttgart), a copious autobiographical novel in the tradition of Keller's immortal "Der grüne Heinrich."

Charly Clerc, in a 36-page pamphlet, "Ecrivains de la Suisse Allemande (Lettres de Lausanne), has written a much needed introduction to contemporary German-Swiss literature. The same author's "Le Génie du Lieu" (Neuchâtel, Attinger), the French-Swiss counterpart to Korrodi's "Geisteserbe der Schweiz," is a useful anthology, grouping under such headings as Landscape—Criticism—Education, etc., representative pages by a score or two of writers, old and new. "La Vie Romantique au Pays Romand" (Lausanne, Freudweiler-Spiro), a collective work, illustrates every aspect of life and manners in French Switzerland during the romantic period. An examination of the book will bring one to the unexpected conclusion that the Swiss as a race are not romantic, Swiss writers of the romantic period responding but feebly to the sublimity and charm of the scenery that proved such an inspiration to Byron or to Shelley.

The "Lettres de Lausanne," whose birth I greeted here in 1929 has been remarkably inactive of late. This apparent passivity however is but the necessary concentration (and gathering in of funds!) before the publication of a *magnum opus*, the first French translation of Gottfried Keller's "Der Grüne Heinrich."

Several of our writers are beginning to find recognition in France. This is all the more necessary since our only literary review, the *Revue de Genève*, has just ceased publication. For ten years (1921-1931) it was open to promising local talent and to foreign writers of note. For ten years the political, social, or cultural problems of various countries were the subject of regular chronicles in the *Revue de Genève*. It published fine work by French writers like Thibaudet or Mauriac. It introduced Rilke, George, Yeats, or your own writers (Christopher Morley was one of these) to the French reading public. Some of Ramuz's work first appeared in the *Revue de Genève* and so did that remarkable little essay, André Bonnard's "Deux Images de l'Homme dans la Littérature Grecque," which I wish the *Saturday Review* would translate for you. Alas! the *Revue de Genève* has died, a victim to the economic slump, the competition of the great French *revues*, and, to our shame be it said, the indifference of our own reading public (in its home town, Geneva, the *Revue* had but 133 subscribers!)

Three books, however, I would select, should I wish to give an American friend a taste of the best in the recent literary production of French Switzerland.

One is a biography, J. de Mestral Combremont's "Vinet-Esquisse de Sa Physionomie Morale et Religieuse (Lausanne, Payot, 1930). Vinet (1797-1847), critic, theologian, moralist, and teacher, a liberal uncompromising thinker, is the man who, more than any other, has taught French Switzerland and French Protestantism how to think. Mlle de Mestral's book is a portrait, not of the theologian or the writer, but of the man: a man, unusually sensitive and unusually brave, one whose insight, tolerance, ardent love of liberty are all the more remarkable when one reads of the stupidity and intolerance that prevailed around him; a man whose astonishing activity and courage are almost miraculous when one hears of the worries, the trials, the maladies, the disappointments of all kinds, that made up his life.

My second selection is "Deux Études sur Virgile" (Lausanne, La Concorde), by Frank Olivier, the Latin professor at the University of Lausanne. There is more in these fifty-odd pages than in many a ponderous tome. There is in particular a thirty-page essay, simply called "Virgile," which is the most balanced and sane survey of the poet's life and work. Calmly, contemptuously removing the dull laborious accretions of generations of ant-like scholars (the comparison is his), Professor Olivier reveals the true face of Virgil. The "Georgics," so long and so foolishly called a didactic poem, he shows to be an impassioned song in praise of work, nature, and the gods, and life ever arising from death. The "Æneid" sings the painful ascent of a predestined people and the "advent of peace after so many errors, sufferings and toil." The essay, the product of a life work of Virgilian study, is both provocative and sensible and will win new readers (or better readers) to Virgil.

For sheer fun, deft humorous and yet reverent handling of complex situations, I would recommend that delicate portrait of the intimacies and perplexities of married life, Walter Jéquier's *Le Roman Involontaire* (Lausanne & Neuchâtel, Editions Spes and La Baconnière). A husband, who is a great reader and a keen and delighted observer of his fellow-creatures and of himself, decides to write a diary. As he is very much in love with his wife, and, for all his critical penetration and bookish knowledge is very ignorant of human nature, he understimates his powers to please, misinterprets the subtle changes in his wife's attitude to him, and gradually comes to the conviction that his wife loves another man, that this man alone can give her complete happiness and that he, her husband, must sacrifice himself. How he proceds to enlighten his wife as to the real meaning of her new feelings, how he fully persuades himself (and almost persuades her) that she loves the other man, how he braces himself for the inevitable sacrifice when in fact he is tortured by a jealousy that he nobly attempts to stifle, how for page after page of the diary we are kept wondering as to his wife's real state of mind and do not know, until the author finally enlightens us, whether the diarist is unusually clairvoyant and sublime or whether he is an egregious fool: I shall not spoil the book by telling. I shall only say in conclusion that there is much truth in it, and a rare mixture of tenderness, pathos, and humor.

"Vinet," "Deux Études sur Virgile," "Le Roman Involontaire:" these may not be the best books published here lately; of all that have come my way, however, they are the most enjoyable.

Stream of Consciousness

THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS. LE MONOLOGUE INTÉRIEUR. By EDOUARD DUJARDIN. Paris. 1931.

TEN years ago everybody coming home from Paris had a copy of "Ulysses" unobtrusively slipped into his luggage. By the time five or six editions had escaped the vigilance of the customs, everybody who ever reads books had read it and had been disappointed in not finding it nearly as bad as he had hoped. The more discerning, who gave the puzzling book more than a furtive peep-show glance, found in it something they had not expected.

It presented a new understanding of human character, a new point of view, and in expressing it, the author had invented a new method in fiction. "Ulysses" was the first whole novel written on the principle that the images hidden in the unspoken depths of the mind are the true indications of human personality. We had always vaguely known this, but no one had shown it to us just this way in a book before. And then we began to talk about the "stream of consciousness."

The last part of the novel, the mental cinema of the mind of Mrs. Bloom, is, in spite of its typography, the easiest to understand. And it is in this long chapter that the method of revelation of whole crude thought as it flows through the mind of a human being, has become a definite literary device. The words, which are symbols of images, are not joined together by logic, but by associations of images linked with images, or of sounds linked with sounds, exactly as they flow through the mind in a relaxed moment of day dreaming. And after we have followed this mental stream for a while, we learn by inference everything one could know about the character. Instead of realizing a personality through action or selected dialogue or through an author's analysis, we come at an understanding through a representative sample of the character's stream of consciousness. This, as a literary method, has come to be a distinguishing mark of modern literature. It was used by William Carlos Williams and T. S. Eliot before "Ulysses" appeared in book form. It became the approach of Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, and Nora Hoult in their fiction. And today, we experience no surprise at opening a story of Louis Bromfield and finding ourselves plunged at once into the thought stream of one of his characters. This method is already one of the most striking literary phenomena of the present decade, and it may well be expected to develop a yet more significant school of writing.

The origins of the form have been discussed a great deal in the literary reviews of Paris, where James Joyce is a name to conjure with. And now we have the strange story of the method and the controversy over it, presented by the man who is admitted to have been the first writer to have made use of it. A new book, "The Unspoken Monologue," by Edouard Dujardin, is an example of literary history writing itself before the Ph. D.'s have poked their noses into the matter. In 1887, young Dujardin, under the influence of the then faintly recognized school of "symbolists," wrote a novelette, "Les Lalriers Sont Coupés." This little story, which is being translated by one of the French translators of "Ulysses," will soon appear under the title of "We'll to the Woods No More." As a story it is not very important. There is a young man, far too sentimental and too naïve for the modern generation. He is in love with a girl in the theatre. She plays with him, leads him on, gets all she can out of him, and grants him nothing but a little flat conversation. The young man swears never to see her again, but at the close of the story we feel that he probably will. He is a little too stupid for us to care one way or the other. The significant thing about the book is that the reader finds himself floating in the stream of impressions, images, ideas, desires, which are the mind of the young man. The shallowness of his character, his interests, tastes, and background may steal over us as an idea of our own when we pause in our reading. The author is never anywhere in sight. Nothing but the images of the slim young mind of the hero. The second page of the story, for example, goes like this:

> . . . It is time. Six o'clock has just struck. Here is the place I am going to. I shall find someone here I want to see. The house; the entrance hall; here we are. Evening just coming on; the air fresh, pleasant; there is a gaiety about everything. The stairway. The first steps. What if he has gone out earlier than usual? He does that sometimes. I am very anxious to tell him about today. The balustrade, second floor; broad, well lighted stairs; windows. He is a good friend of mine; I have told him about my love affair. I shall have a nice evening with him. He won't make fun of me any more. It will be a delightful evening! Why is the stair carpet turned back at this corner? It makes a gray spot against the red, the red which goes on up step after step. Third floor; door to the left; "Office." If he only hasn't gone out. Where could I find him? Oh, well, I'll go down the boulevard. I'll rush in all excited. The outer office. Where is Lucien Chavainne? The huge room with its circle of chairs. There he is, near the table, bending over. He has his hat and coat on. He is putting away papers, hastily, with another clerk. In back, rows of shelves full of blue files tied up with strings. I stand at the door. What fun it will be to tell him about the affair. He looks up; he sees me; how do you do? . . .

Not more than two or three writers recognized the originality of the book at the time of its appearance. It created no interest, and died quietly. Monsieur Dujardin diverted himself to writing poetry, biblical exegesis, and morality plays, until a few years ago, when "Ulysses" called Lazarus back from oblivion. And now, this year, as a man of sixty-odd, he has occupied himself with the history of his own unconscious influence on modern literature!

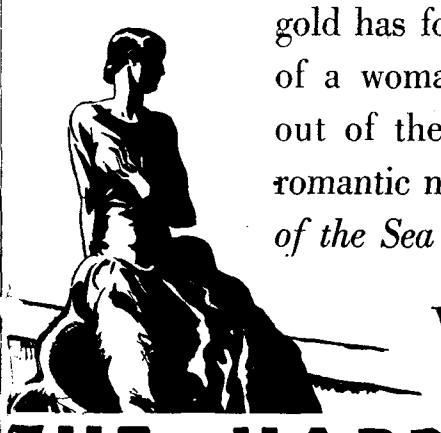
What had happened in the meantime was that a young Irishman, James Joyce, coming to Paris in 1900, by chance fell upon a copy of "Les Lauriers sont Coupés." Its method made a deep impression upon his mind. So much so, that when, toward 1917, he conceived the idea of writing "Ulysses," the form of the little French story influenced him in casting the thought of his own. This influence would probably never have been known even to the Ph. D.'s, if James Joyce had not announced it himself. It was with some difficulty that he persuaded the leading French critics that he had not invented the form. The matter was not clearly settled until Valéry Larbaud wrote about it in a preface, and, the same year, dedicated a novel to Dujardin. There was much literary discussion and there were attempts at definitions and distinctions. All this, Monsieur Dujardin has summarized in his book about his work.

It is a modest study. The author claims priority of invention but no literary greatness. He attributes his own discovery of the method to the influence of Wagner's music dramas in which the orchestra expresses unspoken thoughts that flash through the characters' minds. He makes mention of Dostoevsky and Browning, but evidently does not know them well. He is most emphatic in insisting that neither of them has given us the true "unspoken monologue."

The fact is, however, that these two writers of the last generation have had much to do with forming the taste of the present in England and America. They may not have created the method of the stream of consciousness, but they and Sigmund Freud have made it possible for us to appreciate the method. And without them as a background, "Les Lauriers sont Coupés" might not have caught the interest of the young author of "Ulysses." Browning, in his few unspoken monologues, like—"Meeting at Night," or like the "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister," —takes us right into the mental imagery of his characters. And Dostoevsky, in the chapters in which he shows us the stream of thoughts in Raskolnikov's mind has almost, if not quite, anticipated Dujardin and Joyce. And the studies of Freud have made us familiar with the idea that the hidden images of the mind are true indexes of personality.

A report comes from Moscow that Maxim Gorki is to write the text of two new operas which will be set to music by J. A. Shaporin and produced at the Moscow State Opera.

Not since Joseph Conrad told of Doña Rita . . . has such a romance been written. Again, the arrow of gold has found its mark . . . in the story of a woman who came like a goddess out of the sea. Perhaps the greatest romantic novel by the author of *Casuals of the Sea* and *Command.*



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Points of View

Lindsay's Poetry

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In your Christmas Number appeared an article by Louis Untermeyer in which he reveals, at the moment of his friend's death, the same error of vision which has all along marred his reviews and comments on this poet's work. This last article, though brief, is certain to be widely noted, and I fear that it may be taken as the basis of an estimate of the poetry of Vachel Lindsay. That would be unfortunate. Mr. Untermeyer's published comments on Lindsay's poetry have already narrowed the public's appreciation of Lindsay to a single strain in his work. Mr. Untermeyer has been right in his estimates times without number. But he has been consistently wrong in playing up the showmanship of the most versatile of our twentieth century poets. The public reads, in general, what Mr. Untermeyer points out in contemporary poetry. Should his steady mention of the clown figure and the circus *motif* in Lindsay meet no challenge now, we shall have a whole poet to discover some years hence.

How much of "the new poetry movement" was built upon Vachel Lindsay's work, few people know; but it is a very great deal. Surely we ought to read his poetry aright; first, for its own sake; and last, to prevent our being misled about the principles underlying the whole upsurge of poetic endeavor, which was the only thing in our times that was unscathed by the World War. We have in Vachel Lindsay so much of a key-figure, that we owe it to ourselves, for this once, to look beyond those portions of his work which have been pointed out to us by the one critic who has had to do most of the interpreting among contemporary poets.

The writer has enjoyed the acquaintance of both Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Untermeyer, and he feels sure that the latter wishes nothing so much as that his late friend should receive all the appreciation that is his due. Mr. Untermeyer has been bound, in a sense, to uphold some of the pronouncements he made in early reviews of Lindsay's work; and while the bonds have probably been entirely unconscious, they have all along prevented his giving credit for new and sound developments in Lindsay's poetry. Everyone who has kept in touch with modern poetry remembers the tone of parental chiding and regret with which this critic reviewed the illustrated edition of Lindsay's Collected Poems in 1925. Mr. Untermeyer had created a figure in his own mind for Lindsay to cut, and Lindsay was not cutting that figure. The critic's praise went only to the poems written by that side of Lindsay which Untermeyer had early discovered and declared valid and authentic. The second, third, and fourth Lindsays have not been publicly discovered (not even by Mr. Hazelton Spencer, who had an excellent opportunity in his recent—1930—edition of Lindsay's poems).

We have been wrong all along, of course (and you, Mr. Editor, have been as wrong as anyone), in permitting one voice to say everything that is to be said about one of the arts. We knew we were somewhat wrong to do so; but the matter seemed not terribly important. Had Mr. Lindsay lived another twenty years, as he certainly should have been permitted to do, the passage of time and the force of his work would have revealed to the public the many sides of his poetic gift. But this was not to be; and it now becomes apparent that we know nothing of his work save what has received the public approbation of one critic!

Most people think that Vachel Lindsay never wrote anything but free verse; when, as a matter of fact, he never in all his career wrote a free verse poem. Most people think that Vachel Lindsay's favorite word was "Boom," or some other barbaric sound. But the bulk of his poetry is characterized by a tenderness so fragile that none but the women poets have equalled it. Most people think of him as having been noisy; when in reality he had difficulty in making himself heard before an audience of five hundred or more.

The writer would like to set before you a poet entirely unknown in America, and not described anywhere in Mr. Untermeyer's comments. This poet's name was Vachel Lindsay; and he would have been a strong and good poet in his own right, *even if the poems with those titles we are familiar with had never been written.* This poet might be set forth by merely calling to your attention a splendid body of poems which Mr. Untermeyer has never told us to read, all of them published in Mr. Lindsay's Collected Poems, Illustrated (1925).

For a genuinely surprising experience, Mr. Editor, will you do me the honor and yourself the pleasure, to reach for your copy of Lindsay's Collected Poems and read from it the following lyrics *and no other poems whatsoever?* If you will do this, you will discover a poet the joy and subtlety and lyric power of whose verse you would not have suspected. You will be quite unable to believe that this is the Vachel Lindsay about whom you have heard for years only one kind of comment. And then, Mr. Editor, if you are a good sport, will you pass the experience on to the readers of your paper?

The "program of poetry" consists of the following titles:

To Gloriana, Genesis, Alone in the Wind, Sunshine, Heart of God, Tolstoy Is Plowing Yet, The Cornfields, The Beggar's Valentine, Epitaph for John Bunny, On the Road to Nowhere, How a Little Girl Sang, Hamlet, Sweethearts of the Year, Written for a Musician, Here's to the Spirit of Fire, In Memory of a Child, The Perfect Marriage.

LAWRENCE H. CONRAD.

Montclair, N. J.

In Louisianna

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

I note Mr. Morley's strange query in the Bowling Green of December 28th . . . that he wants to know where the name "Lagonda" originated.

My home state is Louisiana. I was born and reared in Southwest Louisiana (St. Mary Parish), the "French section," immortalized by Longfellow and others. In fact, my home is on the banks of that same Teche (a sluggish, somewhat unromantic stream). And although I cannot remember the names of its owners, I know there is a Lagonda plantation, a sugar plantation, near Patterson, Louisiana. I lived in Franklin, which is nineteen miles from Patterson, and as near as I can remember Lagonda (or LaGonda) plantation is within a mile or two of the city limits of Patterson.

Most of the names in this section of Louisiana are French in origin, though a few of the m are either English or Indian. The "parishes" are all French in name, and there is Bayou Teche, Bayou Bœuf, the towns of New Iberia, St. Martinville, Jeanerette, etc. The plantations also have mostly French names, though Lagonda sounds like it *might* be Indian.

If you are particularly interested in the origin of the word "Lagonda," you can probably obtain the information from Dr. Reid, professor of English, Louisiana State University, University Station, Baton Rouge, La. He has written two books on the origin of Louisiana place names—one for French, and one for Indian words. And if you are interested in the plantation near Patterson, Louisiana, I will endeavor to find out something of its history, ownership, etc., from friends still in the "home grounds.

Chicago, Ill. BEVERLY SMITH LATHAM.

More "Lagonda"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In re the matter of *Lagonda* mentioned in the Bowling Green, I find the following data in Edna Kenton's book "Simon Kenton" (Doubleday Doran, 1930).

Simon Kenton, after he moved from Kentucky to Ohio, in 1799, chose the mouth of Lagonda Creek as the site for his projected mill and general store—this about 2 miles northeast of the original site of Springfield, Ohio—laid out after his arrival and which his wife named—but now included in the city's boundaries. The family papers have it that, owing to his choice of this mill site, a colony sprang up about the place, and waited several years for him to cut "Kenton's Trace" from Lagonda Creek to Newmarket, Ohio, lying almost opposite his old Limestone (now Maysville, Kentucky) on the Ohio, and to erect his mill.

He began to cut "Kenton's Trace" from Kentucky to Lagonda in the fall of 1801 (pp. 255-256). His millstones, cut at Laurel Hill in Pennsylvania, hauled 25 miles to Redstone Old Fort on the Monongahela and then sent down the Ohio to Newmarket, were waggoned to the millsite, more than 100 miles distant—the first wagons to pass over the Trace 1802. They lay there for several years before his mill went up, 1803-1806 (p. 258, 272-273). In 1810 he gave up his mill and general store, perforce! (p. 278).

I am under the impression that the name itself is an old Indian name. It was soon what would be called now a "suburb" of Springfield, and by 1882 at least—probably earlier—it was a part of the town. I had a call this winter from an Ohio enthusiast who several years ago took a photograph in Springfield's busiest section of the old mill site—still recognizable. He is on a hot hunt now for the old mill stones, which, when and if he finds them, will adorn by due or undue process of law, his Chicago suburban home! I am told the name is still preserved in some Springfield Ohio street, avenue, boulevard or whatever, but I cannot vouch for this of myself. SUBSCRIBER.

New York City.

Poor Anne Bradstreet

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Whether Mr. Hervey Allen should have counted Phillis Wheatley, the African slave girl, among the "ladies" included in Mr. Untermeyer's "American Poetry," as asserted by the gentleman from Massachusetts, may be a matter of definition—or geography. But does Mr. Allen write with the authority that comes of knowledge when he refers to "poor" Anne Bradstreet? Surely the daughter of Dudley, the wife of Bradstreet, the author of "Contemplations," "To My Dear and Loving Husband," "The Author to Her Book," and "In Honor of That High and Mighty Princess Queen Elizabeth of Happy Memory," was neither personally nor poetically "poor." Say rather a woman characterized by poetic feeling, loyalty, wit, spirit, and an all but twentieth-century conviction as to the possibilities of woman. "Poor" Anne Bradstreet? Poor Mr. Allen! ARTHUR H. NASON.

New York University.

Dear Brutus

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In your issue for October 10, you give Sherwood Anderson's summary of "Perhaps Women" as follows:

> This little book is intended to be a statement. It may be an absurd statement. It is that modern man cannot escape the machine, that he has already lost the power to escape. He has lost the power to escape because what the machine can do to men has already been done. Man has already accepted the power given him by the machine . . . as his own power. . . . He can no longer stand erect. . . . The impotence of the modern man is felt everywhere. . . . I think it is time now for women to come into power in the western world, to take over the power, the control of life.

And the reviewer (yourself) says, "No one will deny the potential truth of all these charges."

That machinery is the royal road to ruin is a theory which has been stated by a thousand voices in chorus; the interbred chorus which chants the fashion of the hour. What one of them says, they all say. Front-page philosophy holds that reiteration is evidence; that when a statement is repeated often enough it becomes true.

This theory about machinery—the belief that a Thing can make a man, or mar him—is, of course, merely a restatement of belief in witchcraft; or, if you prefer the word, in magic. It is the touching and innocent confidence that fairy or fiend can alter the influence which causes bring to bear upon results. It is the Magic Carpet again, the Cloak of Invisibility, the enchanted sword which makes its owner invincible: except that machinery is to be a bad magic which brings disaster. Amusing stories, and potentially true. Not quite true, because they are otherwise.

It is what I do with the sword that is important. The sword can do nothing to me. If I use an aeroplane to smuggle heroin or morphine, that is not caused by any evil spell cast upon the wings. It is because I have the soul of a louse. If I drove an ox cart, I would put it to the same use. Another might fly the same aeroplane to carry antitoxin to a plague-stricken town beyond the Arctic Circle. Not I.

If I bring terror and death to the road when I drive a car, it is not the plotting stars and my car that make me a murderer. It is because my heart is an anarch's heart, which flouts at regulations serving the general good. If I write drivel on the typewriter or drool it into a microphone, no malice of machinery contrived this imbecility. It is because I am an ass. If I wrote with a goose quill, I would still be an ass.

One thing about machinery seems to have escaped notice; that it saves a lot of backache for the workers. But it is not the workers who complain.

We sometimes wish that more literary people would use their eyes to see things with. Most of them use their eyes to see what other men have written about things. Then they say it again; as in the case of Tomlinson. One idea a year among so many makes thin fare for readers, even if it is a silly idea.

The illustration "Perhaps Women" is the best book review I ever saw. It is Sherwood Anderson. It leaves nothing untold. EUGENE M. RHODES.

"Endless River"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir: I sent a copy of Felix Riesenberg's queer book "Endless River," to a reader in London; his comment on it seems to me interesting enough to reprint. It is important to do what one can to encourage an audience for books that do not fall into any of the familiar pigeonholes.

My London correspondent reports:

"Beyond question it's a whale of a book. Not but that I don't think he's a dirty dog for making me twist my neck like a corkscrew in the effort, here and there, to see what he's after. But that's as much as anything my own perversity. I hope I can be, on occasion, a stout defender of obscurity, knowing damned well that you can't lay life out on a slab like a planked shad. When I don't strain my head over some of his aposiopeses, but properly submit myself, unresisting, to his firm control, I certainly do get a kick on the large scale, as I also do from that amazing little fragment of Joyce's, "Anna Livia Plurabelle." And the way he handles any such pliable reader is masterly. I have never before noticed, in any of his books, such delicacy of control. Throughout, its discipline is firm and cunning. For craftmanship, I don't know what to compare it with in these days, except Joyce—whom one may, of course, legitimately dislike, and whom one may charge with being a devilishly bad influence, but with whom one is sure that one is dealing with, at any rate, the ruins of a very great writer. Humor and tenderness are both in "Endless River," and if the depths are murky, I expect it's because depths have to be. All this comment is very crude and impertinent, but I shall go on commenting and studying the darned thing because I can't get away from it. I want to keep holding it up to the light and looking through it as one does with good beer."

New York City. P. E. G. QUERCUS.

On Translations

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

Mr. Steiner's article on the German translations of Sinclair Lewis (quoted by Mr. Morley) touches a sore spot. Sinclair Lewis is not the only author who has been maltreated in German, but as early as I have been able to discover translations of current literature in all languages are badly done with a few notable exceptions like those of Thomas Mann and Gerhart Hauptmann into English. The reason is not far to seek. A translator must be a stylist in his own tongue and know really intimately the language he professes to translate. In most instances the really competent translators have other interests and begrudge the labor and time a good translation requires, or demand too high a fee. So publishers are forced to hire hack writers. The surprising thing is that translations are no worse.

It is far more discouraging to me that the choice of books to be translated is not guided by better counsel. Most translations are of claptrap literature. But perhaps the worthwhile books would not sell. Pio Baroja is, I believe, still piled high in Knopf's warehouse whereas the publishers of Blasco Ibañez had little trouble disposing of their stock. Probably we have too many book clubs now, but would not a club devoted to publishing really good foreign literature in first rate translations have some chance of success? TAYLOR STARC.

Cambridge, Mass.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Art

MODERN SWEDISH ARTS AND CRAFTS IN PICTURES. By NILS G. WOLLIN. Scribner's. 1931. $15.

An avalanche of books and magazine articles has familiarized us with the progress of modern art in Russia, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and other European countries. Scandinavia has been less voluble. Here however is an orderly story in pictures of the quiet happenings in the useful arts of Sweden—quiet but astounding. In most of the objects represented modern art achieves a rich fulfilment of utility and beauty.

It is immediately apparent that in the Swedish factory the artist sits where he belongs. He creates, he dictates. He has stepped from the haphazard free-lance, odd-job state into a place of security and authority, and the product of his talent has in step advanced from dull tradition and slavish copying to a fresh, intelligent blend of classicism and modernism.

For instance, the textiles. Swedish and Oriental design are as distant as the poles, yet examples are numerous whose *motif* is a curious though harmonious combination of the two. The illustration of a woolen cloth embroidered in cross-stitch by Jämtslöjd, is a case in point. It is primitive Persian, yet it is Scandinavian.

As might be expected, the examples of glass are many and exciting. The industrious artist-craftsmen, Edward Hald and Simon Gate, busily immortalizing themselves and the Orrefors Works, are represented by characteristic pieces, both of them creating beauty in some cases through form, in others by decorative classic design.

Other sections devoted to Interior Decoration, Furniture, Stone, Copper and Bronze, Pewter and Precious Metals are equally illuminative of modern Swedish art in industry. The author has included a few plates of bookbindings, title pages, and posters.

The text is not as good as the pictures. Dr. Wollin's English has a strong Swedish accent which, while thoroughly sympathetic to the contents, is rather disturbing to the reader. In a future printing it might be well to use the more familiar *marquetry* in place of oft-repeated *intarsiatura; intarsia* might be retained to denote true inlay work on furniture.

It is pleasant to find objects of art, beautiful in themselves, so well photographed and reproduced. The heavy paper stock does full juctice to the halftone and colored illustrations. The book is tastefully and strongly bound.

DOG STUDIES. Rudge. $2.

HORSE STUDIES. Rudge. $2.

JOSEPH PENNELL. Rudge. $2.

THE POST IMPRESSIONISTS. By *Adolphe Basler* and *Charles Kunstler*. Payson. $2.50.

THE MODERNISTS. By *Adolphe Basler* and *Charles Kunstler*. Payson, $2.50

HENRI-MATISSE. Norton.

Drama

THE HISTORY OF THE FOURTEENTH STREET THEATRE. By *Mollie B. Steinberg*. Dial.

THE WINTER'S TALE. By *William Shakespeare*. Cambridge University Press. (Macmillan).

SEVEN CONTEMPORARY PLAYS. Edited by *Charles H. Whitman*. Houghton Mifflin. $1.40.

CONTEMPORARY DRAMA. ENGLISH AND IRISH PLAYS. II. Selected by *E. Bradlee Watson* and *Benfield Pressey*. Scribners. $1.25.

ONE-ACT PLAYS FOR EVERYONE. By *Dan Totherot*. French. $2.

TWENTY-FIVE MODERN PLAYS. Edited by *S. Marion Tucker*. Harpers. $5.

Education

THE EXCITEMENT OF TEACHING. By *William Lyon Phelps*. Liveright. $1.50.

TEACHING COMPOSITION IN HIGH SCHOOL. By *Lucia B. Mirrielees*. Harcourt, Brace.

BRITISH FAR EASTERN POLICY. By *R. Stanley McCordoch*. Columbia University Press. $6.

EL PROCURADOR YERBABUENA. Edited by *Daniel da Cruz* and *Willis Knapp Jones*. Century. $1.20.

NURSERY EDUCATION. Century. $2.

SYNTAX. By *George O. Curme*. Heath. $5.

A CHILD'S THIRD NUMBER BOOK. Part II. By *Saul Badanes*. Macmillan. 64 cents.

PROHIBITION. By *K. Gunther*. Neale. $2.

MESSAGES FROM THE UNSEEN. By *C. W. Leadkater*. Madras, Ind. Theosophical Publishing House.

Fiction

THE LADY WHO CAME TO STAY. By R. E. SPENCER. Knopf. 1931. $2.50.

"It occurred to Lucia afterwards that from Katherine's viewpoint her visitation must seem to have come very near failure for if, as she had said, its purpose had been to point, for Lucia, a way to relief, she must have seen that the fatal presage with which it had ended must definitely, finally, have precluded the prospect of any relief whatever." So runs the style of this ambitious and promising first novel, if you can call style what is so patently an acquired mannerism. The publisher's enthusiasm for the book is justified so far as its promise goes; but its manner is nearly the worst conceivable, a confused echo of certain inimitable masters of manner. We are not surprised to learn that the story-teller's special gods are Meredith, Conrad, and Henry James: especially, it is clear, the author of "The Ambassadors," which he salutes as "the loveliest novel I know." James is one of the great ones, but a dangerous idol for a forming writer. It is nearly impossible to be conscious of him without parodying him. An amusing collection of reviews of him might be made, all more or less echoing the tangled and pompous diction of the great original. It is to be hoped that this promising disciple will continue to admire James's substance and savor and will be able to shake off the influence of James's (at second hand) abominable manner.

That is an odd hope to be uttering now of a new writer, but this one seems to have skipped a few decades, the whole period that bred the Cummingses and the Hemingways, and to have gone back for his models to the time that produced accomplished Jacobites like Mrs. Wharton and Miss Sedgwick.

"The Lady Who Came to Stay" is not imitative in substance, but an original and haunting study of human relations among the several generations of a family hopelessly bound together by the tie of blood. The old house in which the family life centers becomes haunted by a series of ghosts or presences who make it the scene of their prolonged struggle for dominance for evil or good. It is a sort of ghost story on the spiritual and psychological plane, not without its aspects of mere bodily dread and amaze. But the deeper horror lies in its exhibition of a living world besieged and imperiled by the passions and intentions of beings whose bodies long since ceased to inhabit the family home. This is enough to say of the tale as a tale. In sum it is vital enough to make one forget its mannerism; and that is saying much.

BLACK DANIEL: The Love Story of a Great Man. By HONORÉ WILLSIE MORROW. Morrow. 1931. $2.50.

From her spirited and successful presentations of Lincoln and Adoniram Judson in fiction, Mrs. Morrow turns to Daniel Webster. She has connected and heightened into drama two episodes of his middle life: his second marriage, and his hesitation, following the death of his brother Ezekiel, over the question of retiring from public affairs. As most people know, in 1829 Webster, then forty-seven years old and the father of three children, married Caroline Le Roy, daughter of a wealthy mercantile family in New York. Sober history has never regarded this as an ardently romantic match. Before the wedding Webster described his bride as "amiable, discreet, prudent, with enough of personal comeliness to satisfy me, and of the most excellent character and principles"—a somewhat frigid description. After the wedding he borrowed money from her family. Probably not so many people know that about the same time Webster, in his grief over the loss of Ezekiel and in temporary lassitude, threatened to abandon politics and take to law and money-making. Mrs. Morrow, with a romancer's license, makes Miss Le Roy the instrument of saving him for labors of state.

It is an interesting, vigorous, full-bodied narative; but it is least successful in the most vital element, the rendering of Webster's personality and character. Mrs. Morrow makes good use of her opportunities for describing the Crowninshield trial, the Webster-Haynes debate, the social life of Salem and Washington, the great men of the day—John Marshall, William Wirt, Rufus Choate, John Jacob Astor. She picks her way unfalteringly through minutiæ of politics, travel, and entertainment. But it is a highly sentimentalized Webster which she gives us: a Webster of bows, pretty speeches, bursts of poetry, and more gallantry than manliness. He is neither convincing nor pleasing. Mrs. Morrow would obviously have done better if, following the rule she observed with Lincoln and Judson, she had refrained from showing her hero in soft boudoir postures. The grim, tempestuous, hard-drinking, hard-hitting Webster does not look right in ribbons.

HESTER CRADDOCK. By ALYSE GREGORY. Longmans, Green. 1931. $2.

Miss Gregory's novel commands more than passing attention, despite its almost complete failure. She deserves commendation for the courage implied in attempting to exploit a theme that would tax the ability of a master. Hester and Nelly Craddock, sisters of utterly opposite temperament, meet and love the same man. Were this the main-spring of the novel, it would be banal enough to deserve the oblivion it will doubtless find. The book's distinction lies in the person of Edwin Pallant, the hunchback, whose presence and influence eventually lift the conflict to what pitch and intensity it achieves. Brilliantly endowed mentally, the cripple finds himself attracted to both girls, though tragically impotent to arouse more than compassion. This he receives in great measure from Nelly who, in a moment of benevolent pity and kindness of heart, comes to him. In her attempt to resolve the subsequent complications—the subtle influence of Edwin on Nelly, Hester, and his friend Halmath and to expound the vindictive nature of Hester, Halmath's fumbling impotence and Edwin's tortured life—Miss Gregory hits the inevitable snag. Her people are empty shells, sketched unconvincingly, poorly motivated. Her prose is mannered, stumbling, and cacaphonous; her dialogue stale and unilluminated by any real insight. The result, despite the fine intention and the sincere attempt, is a pathetic botch.

SWAIN'S SAGA. By *A. D. Howden Smith*. Macmillan. $2.50.

LEADING A DOG'S LIFE. By *Arthur T. Walden*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

THE VICTORIOUS KNIGHT. By *Estella M. Kaiser*. Stratford. $2.50.

TWO ON AN ISLAND. By *Stella Hutcheson Dabney*. Dallas, Texas: Southwest Press. $1.75.

CHINA RED. By *H. T. Tsiang*. New York: Tsiang, Box 66, Station D.

THE INTIMATE LIFE OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA. By *Norman Hill*. Sears. $2.50.

PETER AND ALEXIS. By *Bernard Guilbert Guerney*. Modern Library. 95 cents.

DROLL STORIES. By *Honoré de Balzac*. Modern Library. 95 cents.

ON THE RELIGIOUS FRONTIER. By *Percival Chubb*. Macmillan. $1.50.

TWENTY-ONE. By *Erdman Harris*. Long & Smith. $1.50.

THE HOUSE OF TEMPTATION. By *Veros Carleton*. Graphic. $2.

DIVORCE TRAP. By *Sinclair Drago*. Macaulay. $2.

THE WEEK-END WIFE. By *Dolf Wyllarde*. Macaulay. $2.

DARK GLORY. By *Dorothy Dow*. Farrar & Rinehart. $2.50.

MOANING CANYON. Stratford. $2.50.

Foreign

LA GUERRE. By *J. L. Aubun*. Paris: Daudet.

GOETHE'S LETZTES LEBENSJAHR. By *Paul Fischer*. Weimar: Böhlaus Nachfolger.

GOETHE ALS BENUTZER DER WEIMAR BIBLIOTHEK. Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger.

LA VIE AMÉRICAINE. By *Manuel Braunschug*. Paris: Colin.

CLAIRE. By *Jacques Chardonne*. Paris: Grasset.

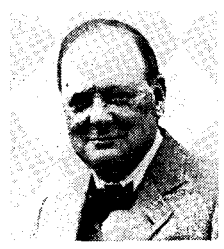
L'IDÉE DE L'ART POUR L'ART DANS LITTÉRATURE ANGLAISE PENDENT LA PÉRIODE VICTORIENNE. By *Louis Rosenblatt*. Paris: Champion.

(Continued on page 449)

NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS OF THE YEAR

The Unknown War
by Winston S. Churchill
author of "The World Crisis"

"Not only the best . . . but the single volume so far produced that supplies even an adequate notion of the struggle on the Eastern fronts during the World War."—*Frank H. Simonds in the New York Herald Tribune.* $5.00


Winston Churchill

Discretions
by Frances, Countess of Warwick

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Gardens of Colony and State
Compiled and edited for the Garden Club of America by Alice G. B. Lockwood

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On the High Seas

FITZ, JR. WITH THE FLEET. By FITZHUGH, JR. New York: Brewer, Warren and Putnam. 1931.

JIM KANE'S TREASURE. By C. M. BENNETT. New York: Dutton. 1931. $2.

THE MYSTERY CHEST. By Rear-Admiral E. R. G. EVANS. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by JOHN D. WHITING

"FITZ, JR. with the Fleet" is a fascinating little book—in spite of its rather misleading title, which suggests something akin to the "Rollo Boys in the Navy." Instead, this is a true story told by a boy of thirteen, a very bright and observant youngster who sets things down concisely and simply. This record of what he saw and heard while aboard the battleship *California* contains much information of interest to men as well as boys, to anyone, in fact, who has curiosity about the inner workings of the United States Navy.

In his eagerness to know and understand, Fitz, Jr., recalls each vivid detail, while his background as the son of a naval officer—and one who is also a writer—is a great help, of course, to his understanding, and the reader's. Nor is he too young to produce some shrewd comments on his experiences; for example, on page 17:

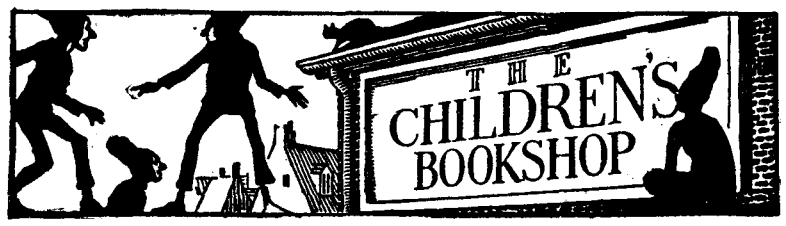
> It's a funny thing, the more important a man is the more simple and friendly he seems to be. I am beginning to believe that only the second-raters are high hat.

In his command of language this precocious youngster is amazing. Perhaps, in certain parts describing technical matters, he had some help from his father. He had, at least, the very good sense to confine himself to simple narration of facts, and yet his book gives a vivid impression of the character as well as the appearance of both officers and "gobs." It is a breezy account and I can recommend it unreservedly to all sorts of boys from the age of ten up.

"Jim Kane's Treasure" (C. M. Bennett) is juvenile fiction of a very light type. Ships sail over some kind of waves, but neither ships nor waves are described; men die of terrible wounds, but no blood flows and no one feels much depressed. The author is evidently interested only in entertaining boys of a very tender age. He writes well enough, too, but this book is very ephemeral. In the face of the stubborn tradition that boys' books must move fast and be "thrilling," I protest that thrills depend upon the substance and vitality of the story. To feel the excitement of battle one must know the men who are fighting, to rejoice at a timely rescue one must feel some affection for the rescued. And this, I think, applies to boys as well as adults.

In "The Mystery Chest," Rear-Admiral Evans has produced a very readable yarn. It marks, I think, a decided advance over "Pirate's Doom," which he published last year. The admiral has developed, since then, the art of setting a solid stage for his plot before rushing somewhat prematurely into an endless wrack of action and intrigue.

"The Mystery Chest" is the tale of an English lad who finds and revives an ancient mariner, the sole survivor of a shipwreck. As his strength returns, the rescued stranger brings a grim secret into the boy's life, and there results a treasure seeking cruise and many other exciting developments. This plot is not very original, it follows closely on the "Treasure Island" model, but it is carried out with zest and skill and a fine feeling for the good salt winds. Captain Anger makes a very acceptable villain, "Silence is not without character interest. But the real strength of the book lies in its atmosphere, the convincing quality of its local color. Probably, as a boy, this seagoing author dwelt—even as you and I—in the atmosphere we find in his book, that of seaports and mysterious islands. And I hope that the American boys of today will take kindly to this mystery chest, this rugged, windswept land of fiction which takes the reader right out of himself.



Conducted by KATHERINE ULRICH

What of Boys' Books in 1931?

By MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY

WHAT the field of boy's literature in America needs today is more first grade writers.

I have just completed reading twenty-odd boys' books, theoretically the pick of the fall lists for older boys. Of the lot, only two stand all the simple and not too rigorous tests to which a book of this kind should be put: Is it interesting to boys—has it plot, and does it treat of boy-subjects? Is it true—that is, does it deal with natural situations and natural characters, is it motivated properly, is it "true to life?" Is it informative? Is it wholesome? And is it written with enough skill to make the characters real people, the style something more than a mere hack job of throwing words together?

The two tales whose answers to these tests are most nearly satisfactory are Gunby Hadath's "The Mystery Cross" (reviewed separately December 12) and William Heyliger's "Johnny Bree" (reviewed December 26). The rest of the twenty-odd scatter all up and down the scale. Some of them hit hard on some points and miss widely on others. Most of them score on at least one point, though a few are sadly low in total percentage. But none of them ranks in class one with these two.

What does 1931 demand of boys' fiction?

When a separate literature for boys commenced to develop in the United States, half a century and more ago, there were two general classes into which fiction fell: the "Sunday school story" and the dime novel. *The Youth's Companion*, before 1900 the largest magazine in the world, was the chief encouragement for the first type. It was characterized by high "moral" content; it was synthetic purity sugarcoated with a fiction background frequently neither real nor convincing, and usually utterly lacking in that most vital of all elements in boys' literature, interestingness. Naturally boys turned from its preachments, its whitewashed heroes, and its pale plots to the stirring dime novel, the adventure story which—whatever it lacked—possessed to a high degree that most necessary quality, the ability to entrance the youthful imagination.

But these adventure stories, too, lacked many things demanded by careful critics. They were unreal; they were bloodthirsty; they were no better in characterization and verisimilitude than the Sunday school stories. They were very badly written, and they were certainly unwholesome in total effect.

So the editors interested in literature for boys were crying for something better. They asked for stories that had enough of adventure, or excitement, to satisfy the normal boy craving for yarns that made blood run and scalps tingle. They asked for situations and characters that were real—real persons doing real things, and doing them not for quixotic or sentimental or esoteric reasons but for normal human reasons, understandable to normal readers.

They asked—perhaps with too much insistence—that the stories have some kind of informative background (the boy must learn as he is entertained!). They wanted stories which, in general, upheld some admirable principle—a desire based on the foct in boy psychology that juvenile and adolescent readers tend to generalize from the specific, to apply the rules of conduct governing an individual case to all cases of vaguely similar nature. And they asked that the stories be handled by writers skilled enough to give them some literary flavor—the flavor that comes from careful and accurate characterization, good writing, believable action.

That turned out to be a pretty big order. But these editors set out to fill it. One of its chief seekers was Walter P. McGuire, who founded *Boy's Life* for the Boy Scouts of America and was later drafted by Griffith Ogden Ellis, editor of *The American Boy*, to continue the search. "Boys' mentalities are entitled to respect," Mr. McGuire was fond of saying. "Boys are entitled to just as good writing, just as careful editing, as are adults."

It is still a big order. It is an order filled less satisfactorily—at least, less frequently—than is the same kind of order for adult fiction. But boys' editors make it the basis for consideration of manuscripts, and feel as keenly as can any critic the frequent failure of material they publish to come up to it.

One need look no farther than the cash register to find the chief stumbling block in the path of editors seeking the best material for boys' fiction. The best-selling boys' book will never make as much money as an adult best-seller. Adult magazines, with huge circulations and far wider opportunities for revenue-producing advertising, are able to pay higher prices than can boys' magazines. And so the most skilful writers naturally turn their energies to the production of the most profitable kind of material.

A secondary stumbling block is the fact that many able writers prefer treating adult problems and adult characters to writing about boy subjects for boys. A few writers with notable records of success in the adult field, however, sacrifice the chance for large profit to the desire to work for boys, and it is from them that much of the best boy fiction of the last thirty years has come. Such writers as Ellis Parker Butler, Laurie York Erskine, Clarence Budington Kelland, Charles Nordhoff, Charles J. Finger, Emma-Lindsay Squier, Dhan Gopal Mukerji, even Rudyard Kipling, for example (and this is not by any means the complete list) have turned a share of their time over to the production of boys' stories.

There is a group of writers whose entire output lies in the older boy's field, of course—some of the leaders among them are Mr. Heyliger, Ralph Henry Barbour, Harold Sherman, Franklin Mering Reck, Howard Pease. From this group—when it is taken to include, also, the men who turn out books as Ford turns out motor cars—the production is very much larger than from the first; but, because of the quantity-basis writers, its average is lower.

There, then, are the problems facing boys' editors—high standards, relatively small production. Combine with these the facts that the United States is blessed with a long list of publishers supporting juvenile book departments, and that each of these departments must present new books each fall and spring: you get the inevitable answer. There can be only a few outstandingly good books for older boys each year; the majority must be lacking in one or more of the basic elements considered important.

Let us see how some of this fall's list fail to come up to standard. Mr. Barbour's latest volume in his amazingly long string, for instance: "The Fumbled Pass" (Appleton, $2). It is the tale of a boy whose gameness has been seriously undermined by the fact that he fumbled a pass in a crucial football game; of course he wins back his courage in the final chapter. It has readability, the pleasant humor, the human, likable boys that always distinguish Barbour books. But it seems a heavily padded story—one frequently feels that Mr. Barbour simply had not enough material to make the book-length yarn, and so resorted to thousands of words meaning very little to fill out to Page 287. And its worst fault is the unlikelihood of its situation. Certainly it is not one of Mr. Barbour's best jobs.

"Douglas of Porcupine," by Louise Andrews Kent (Houghton Mifflin, $2) also has its virtues and also is badly stretched out. A tale of a search for treasure by a family of children on an ice-locked island off the coast of Maine, it is well told, has excellent and believable characters, presents interesting situations, but it is spotted with unessential incident which slows up its movement, its boys and girls too often talk like "people in books," and its plot is pretty sketchy. For younger children it should prove a good book; for older boys it can hardly be recommended.

The same faults, though in more exaggerated form, combine with weak characterization and a too unlikely situation to make Charles B. Driscoll's "Treasure Aboard" (Farrar & Rinehart, $2) decidedly ineffective. Mr. Driscoll has his boys unearth a sixteenth century Spanish galleon on an island in the Arkansas River and float down to the Mississippi Delta in a flood; they become millionaires through the treasure they find in the vessel's vaults. Long speeches and badly handled descriptive or explanatory passages—frequently inserted damningly in incidents that should move like lightning—mar the story.

Neither Donal Hamilton Haines's "The Southpaw" (Farrar and Rinehart, $2) nor Jonathan Brooks's "Pigskin Soldier" (Doubleday, Doran, $1.50) makes the grade in high. The first is a tale of vindictive, ugly schoolboy underhandedness against the very righteous hero; though it is smoothly told, has pretty good characters, and though it will hold interest all the way through, it cannot fail to give unanalytical boy readers a false impression. "Pigskin Soldier" is a sentimental story on an interesting thesis—that racial prejudice (in this case evinced by the Irish coach against the Jewish football candidate) is cruel and unfair. The story, however, seems badly overdrawn. You find it hard to believe in the actions of the coach, and you doubt many of the minor situations into which the characters move, even though you like the characters.

Thames Williamson, whose "Hunky" was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in 1929, has used fictionized form to tell facts about the Mississippi flood of 1923 in his "The Flood-Fighters" (Houghton Mifflin, $2). It has no plot whatsoever—it is merely a chronological account of the experiences of characters that are pretty wooden from start to finish.

On the contrary "Smiley Adams" (Longmans, Green, $2), by R. J. Burroughs, has too much plot. It's a blood-and-thunder mystery story, with not much mystery, about a group of boys involved in the enmity of a group of 1931 gangsters. It has snatches of football thrown in for good measure, and it manages to be very stiff and unconvincing.

All of this seems to indicate that boys' literature is in a pretty bad way. The situation isn't as serious as that. Every year appear a number of first-rate boys' books, along with the larger number that for one reason or another escape being first rate.

But if some genius could convince experienced writers of the first water that doing fiction for boys is worth while, the percentage of first-rate books would be a lot higher. Until the genius appears, we shall have to pick and choose pretty carefully.

Mitchell V. Charnley is a member of the Department of Technical Journalism of Iowa State College. He is also on the editorial staff of "The American Boy," the author of "Boys' Life of Herbert Hoover," and editor of "Play the Games: the Book of Sport."

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The New Books

Miscellaneous

(*Continued from page* 447)

MODERN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL. By C. DELISLE BURNS. Macmillan. 1931. $2.50.

Dr. Burns has given us in the brief compass of three hundred pages an incisive and full-packed, though by no means profound, analysis of recent changes and present tendencies in world civilization; a book, like everything he writes, pungent, stimulating, and as contemporaneous as the last newspaper. The title is perhaps misleading. It implies a pessimistic or questioning attitude, and an attempt to forecast the future. The fact is that Mr. Burns is an optimist about civilization. He emphasizes the healthier elements in European, American, and Asiatic civilization; insists that even such phenomena as dictatorships ("a method of modernizing medieval Europe") and the Chinese civil wars are on the whole good; and without making many predictions, disentangles the best results of modernity as a basis for future progress. His volume is a practical handbook for the reformers who, concentrating on some special evil, have neglected the broad streams of worldwide change. He tells us that if we only give these streams rational direction, they will rapidly take us into a happier era.

Like all works dealing in broad generalizations, Mr. Burns's book is open to much criticism in detail; but such criticism is hardly worth while. He believes that the nineteenth century accomplished two great changes, mechanization and large-scale social organization. With the twentieth century has come a new age that as yet many people imperfectly apprehend. The city-area, the power-machine, mass-production, public health, and a host of new inventions have transformed the more advanced and more highly industrialized regions—England, Germany, Eastern United States; and the transformation is spreading. Civilization is showing more and more experimentalism—in education, in industry, in diets, clothing, and amusements, and in social relationships. The relations of nations are changing. Thus modern civilization requires more tropical products, and the modern world is adopting a changed attitude toward primitive peoples. The "Americanization" of Europe, the advantages and disadvantages of which Mr. Burns discusses realistically, has been stimulated by the war. Asia is at the same time responding to European industrialism, and groping for an independent type of modernization. None of Mr. Burns's principal statements are, when analyzed, really new discoveries. But he vitalizes and illustrates them by a mass of novel and striking facts about our modern world—film imports, motorbus travel, arms shipments, industrial laboratories, health, literacy—that give the book power and freshness. Its comprehensive views and up-to-the-minute reliance on the latest sources of information make it as exhilarating as a shower-bath. And not until it is finished will the reader ask if it is not too robustly cheerful about a civilization that is just now very unhappily conscious of being "on trial."

MANHATTAN SIDE-SHOW. By KONRAD BERCOVICI. Century. 1931. $4.

This is a book of sketches, bound together by the fact that they are all laid in New York. Some of the chapters deal with neighborhoods, for instance with the county-fair atmosphere of old Fourteenth Street, and its reappearance on modern Forty-Second Street. More are about people, some of them famous, like Mr. Theodore Dreiser, most of them obscure "characters," a restaurant-keeper who is under another name a celebrated psychologist, a Greek who continues to deliver cigarettes to his old customers though he has become a millionaire, and many others. The book will not add much to one's actual knowledge of New York, since the places mentioned are either well-known (like Forty-Second Street) or are protected by a secrecy Mr. Bercovici is not going to violate, but it is fairly entertaining. Similarly the reminiscences of celebrities are amusing but superficial.

THE HUSSEY. CUMBERLAND MISSION AND AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE. By *Samuel Flagg Bemis.* Princeton University Press. $3.50.

SOUTHERN EDITORIALS ON SECESSION. Compiled by *Dwight Lowell Dumond.* Century. $4.

Poetry

LET US IN. By *Jane Revere Burke.* Dutton. $2.

HORIZON FRAMES. By *Tom Sweeny.* Philadelphia: Poetry Publishers. $2.

THE ORPHEUS OF ANGELS POLITIAN AND THE AMINTA OF TASSO. Translated by *Louis E. Lord.* Oxford University Press. $3.

SWIFT WATER. By *Clifford Allen.* Philadelphia: Poetry Publishers.

SAINT JOAN OF ARC. By *George B. A. McCloskey.* Neale.

SPARKS. By *Clara Lundis Askew.* Emory University, Ga.: Banner Press.

Brief Mention

IT was an ingenious idea of Kent B. Stiles to write a historical-geographical account illustrated by stamps. His *Geography and Stamps* (Whittlesey House. 1931. $3) goes around the world with a stamp collector. Another very interesting book of a different kind is the collection of contemporary accounts of *Sea Fights in the East Indies* in the years 1602 to 1639 when the Dutch, Portuguese, and English were all adventuring there. This book, which is published by the Harvard University Press ($3.50), is edited with an introduction by Boies Penrose. The University of North Carolina Press is publishing *Aspects of the Social History of America,* a little book reprinting four lectures given in Mr. Holyoke College, on Art by Theodore Sizer, on the American Revolution by Andrew C. McLaughlin, on the theme, "Are We Better Than Our Ancestors," by Dixon Ryan Fox, and on "Thoreau and the Machine Age," by Henry Seidel Canby. Christopher Morley's charming and much commented upon Bowling Green essays on Bermuda, which appeared in the *Saturday Review*, have been collected in an attractive little book called *Notes on Bermuda,* and published by Henry, Longwell and Another ($1). Another well printed book is the *Collected Essays, Papers, etc., of Robert Bridges,* the late Poet Laureate (Oxford University Press, 1931. $1). This series contains the Poems of Mary Elizabeth Coleridge and Lord De Tabley's Poems, being essays on both authors.

The Stephen Daye Press of Brattleboro, Vermont, has appropriately published Christopher Morley's *Blythe Mountain, Vermont,* in large and attractive format. This brief narrative essay on the Berkshires and the Vermont Hills is an excellent morsel of travel literature. It gets the peculiar flavor of the Berkshire country and gets it all the better because the author builds up the remarks of the travelling children into a poetry of description. *Blythe Mountain* first appeared in the Bowling Green of the *Saturday Review.* It is illustrated by an admirable etching of the Green Mountains by Andrew R. Butler.

A correspondent to a London journal says:

"The Great Western Railway Company has just produced an outsize and novel luggage label. Printed in yellow and black, it is almost four times the size of an ordinary sticking slip, and half the space is occupied with the head of William Shakespeare. The words "Passenger by Shakespeare express London to Stratford-on-Avon" will in future indicate to many envious eyes overseas that the man with the labelled luggage has made the great pilgrimage. Lots of other people travel to Stratford by the Shakespeare express, but Paddington Station makes no secret of the fact that the label is meant especially for Americans.

"There was a time some years ago when the British railways complained that the habit of leaving old labels on trunks and suitcases was a nuisance to the porters and delayed their work. Many then destroyed old foreign labels that they had cherished for years and have never had the heart to make a fresh collection. The fashion for using small hand luggage, most of it light and short-lived, has done still more to destroy the habit.

"But the Americans have had no such restriction and are eager as ever to take their luggage home plastered all over with names of places they have visited, if only for an hour or two, and hotels they have stayed in. Railway porters say that they are always very particular that none of these mementoes shall be defaced. The Shakespeare label is sure to have pride of place, and no doubt its success will lead to the production of a small-scale national portrait collection."

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.* As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

M. H. R., Panhandle, Texas, needs books with concise biographical information about the foremost living poets, novelists, and dramatists, having found it hard to supply demands from students with themes dealing with living writers.

FOR those who did not see my passionate praise of "Living Authors" (Wilson) I repeat that this big five-dollar book is all but indispensable for editorial use (I have two workshops and a copy at each) or school reference. A school library should also have "The Women Who Make Our Novels." and "The Men Who Make Our Novels," excellent collections of brief biographies and critical sketches alphabetically arranged, published by Dodd, Mead, and the "Best Plays" series of annuals by Burns Mantle (Dodd, Mead), which keeps one abreast of dramatics. *J. H., New York, seeing the request of M. E. D., Washington, for recent and valuable works of Shakespearean criticism,* says that "The Wheel of Fire," by G. Wilson Knight (Oxford University Press), is "the most exhilarating criticism that has come from anyone in many years. In one sense iconoclastic and with a fresh point of view, it has the convincing logic of Bradley. This volume, which concerns itself with interpretation of the tragedies, has been followed by a second, very recently published, 'The Imperial Theme.' I have not yet read the second book but I am positive that it must be as fine as the first." *A California correspondent is especially anxious to trace a short story* in which a group of small boys on circus day, not young enough to get in on twenty-five cent tickets, delegate a little fellow, of a rival crowd, to buy five tickets presumably for himself at as many different booths. His ingenious double-crossing of his clients and the high finance involved is the climax of the story. *The California Christian College, Los Angeles, Cal.,* is putting on a campaign among local church people to gain "Friends of the Library" who will give it at least one book a year. Its Promotion Department asks for stories about the influence any book has had on the life of any reader. I have sent my own testimony; perhaps others who patronize this department may wish to send on a good word for the character-building powers of some favorite book.

J. E. W. DUBOIS, Wyoming, has more news for J. G. H., Tennessee, about books on the devil. An interesting one, he says, is Thompson's "The History of the Devil" (Harcourt, Brace), giving a different viewpoint on the devil's development from Garcon and Finchon, "one which, to my mind, should be synthesized with the latter writers. Two recent publications about the devil which I have not yet seen but which sound as if they might be of interest to your correspondent are "Nightmares, Witches, and Devils," by Ernest Jones (Norton), and "The Devil in Legend and Literature," by Maximilian Rudevin (Open Court). And for *O. M., New York,* there is an interesting article on movies in Japan in the December 1931 issue of *Asia. D. F. G., Indianapolis, Ind.,* owns an old novel found in the attic with title-page gone, "Gilbert Rugge," something in the style of Trollope but more stilted; her detective instincts are aroused by the fact that its authorship cannot so far be traced. It may have been a Harper publication in the 'sixties. *M. H. H., Clearfield, Pa., thinks that the reader in Lausanne, Switzerland,* interested in "old-fashioned novels" would like "The Semi-Attached Couple," a charming old novel that appeared on the library shelves at Albany a few years since, when revived. This one I did not read, but I found much quiet amusement in "The Bachelor of the Albany" (Stokes), another of the "revived" early-Victorian novels of this series.

I. W., Philadelphia, Pa., needs two or three books on the problems of British labor, on business and unemployment, and on the profit motive in industry. I referred this to R. A. Sawyer, chief of the economic division of the New York Public Library, with this practical result. For British labor, J. F. Bray's "Labour's Wrongs and Labour's Remedy" (London School of Economics and Political Science), G. D. H. Cole's "A Short History of the Britisth Working Class Movement, 1789-1925" (Allen & Unwin), and P. F. Gemmill's "Present-day Labour Relations" (Chapman & Hall). For the profit motive, J. A. Hobson's "Economics and Ethics" (Heath) in which is a chapter on Profits as Incentives; Alfred Marshall's "Principles of Economics" (Macmillan), which has one on Profit of Capital and Business Power, and S. H. Slichter's "Modern Economic Society" (Holt), with a chapter on The Reward of Enterprise. For business and unemployment, W. H. Beveridge's "Unemployment, a Problem of Industry" (Longmans, new edition), E. S. Smith's "Reducing Seasonal Unemployment" (McGraw-Hill), a report of experience of American manufacturing concerns; R. T. Ely's "Hard Times: The Way In and the Way Out, with a Special Consideration for the 'Seen and the Unseen'" (Macmillan), and W. A. Berridge's "Cycles of Unemployment in the United States, 1903-1922" (Houghton Mifflin).

E. H. F., Mount Airy, North Carolina, is looking for books about knights and their armorial bearings, their feats at arms, and in general anything that will supply a demand created by Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" in a boys' school. There is a large, well-illustrated book made of studies of various aspects of the subject, "Chivalry" (Knopf), by members of the staff of King's College, edited by F. Prestage; this costs six dollars but is a sort of one-volume encyclopedia of knighthood, vividly interesting to one who cares for the subject; it is one of the volumes of the History of Civilization series. Boys will be glad to get the anthology of famous stories about knights and their exploits, "Clash of Arms," edited by John Grove (Dodd, Mead), a recent publication. As for heraldry, the class will probably get the most from the large, well-illustrated "Romance of Heraldry," by C. W. Scott-Giles (Dutton), for this is a record of the personal, romantic, and dramatic element in history as it takes shape in the armorial bearings of famous families. "Heraldry," by A. C. Fox-Davis (Hitchcock), is the book for a beginner interested in setting up a coat-of-arms or using one correctly after the present rules; it is concise and reliable. Another way to get a coat-of-arms is to appear in "Who's Who"; then, if my experience is typical, someone in Germany, someone in Spain, will send you directions, financial mainly, for having one dug out from the dim backward and abysm of time and delivered in colors on cardboard. A Spanish one should be uncommonly good; I once asked the daughter of Professor Velasquez de la Cadena, author of the famous Spanish dictionary, why the chain in her name and she said quite simply that some time ago something must have happened involving one, for there were three links as one of the quarterings. When I asked when this had been added, it appeared it was some time before Columbus. Just to keep the record straight, "Heraldry for Craftsmen and Designers" is a practical manual published by Pitman, "Decorative Heraldry," by G. W. Eve (Harcourt, Brace), is a work for craftsmen, and, for anyone interested in applied design, Herbert Cole's "Heraldry and Floral Forms used in Decoration" (Dutton) will be useful; it has unusually fine pictures.

E. T. F., Meriden, Conn., is writing a club paper on the subject "Censorship." The most thorough-going book I know on the subject is "To the Pure: a Study of Obscenity and the Censor," by Ernst and Seagle (Viking Press); this is a comprehensive survey, and other books are named in its bibliography. *L. W. B., Cambridge, Mass., says:* H. R. P. of Dorset, Vermont, who asked for travel information about Rhodes and Crete, and another recent inquirer for books about the Dalmatian coast will find just the concrete, helpful material they both require for their own travel purposes in Mrs. Lars Anderson's "A Yacht in Mediterranean Seas." It treats not only of Dalmatian and Albanian ports and points inland, but also of the more remote portions of Greece (such as the pinnacle monasteries of Meteora and Mount Athos), and of the less

(*Continued on next page*)

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Reader's Guide

(*Continued from preceding page*)

known but all the more exciting islands of the Mediterranean, including Rhodes, Crete, Santorin, Corsica, and Malta. *M. C. F., Augusta, Maine,* shows me how I neglected my chances in youth. "I was amused," says she, "by what you say about the *Police Gazette*. Didn't you wear bangs? I did, and they had to be trimmed and so I made the acquaintance not only of the *Police Gazette* (was anything else ever just that shade of pink?) but of a magazine named *The Standard*. I can even remember a naughty poem from the *Standard*, about a picture of a young lady in the décolletage of the 'nineties: 'Someone oses, Who poses, With roses, And very few clotheses.' I wondered how anything so silly could get printed in an adult magazine, and I have remembered it all these years!" *G. P., Gilbert, Minn.*, is looking for a book published not later than 1863, probably called "The Casket of Literary Gems" and with a story in which a little boy so fixed things that a stream of water ran through his hut by his bed; fairies came in on it and took him away in their boat. Does anyone recognize it?

E. D. R., Detroit, Mich., decides, on his daughter's fifth birthday, that he is completely lost in the maze of contemporary literature for children. Will I then "outline a method by which this innocent child may take the right literary paths, missing nothing of importance or interest among the old landmarks, and seeing the worthwhile among the new?"

I am the last person in the world to outline a "method" for anything, least of all for anything so lovely as opening to a little girl the door of delight into the world of books; I have never been able even to prepare a set of form letters for the questions asked by this department, and no two have ever been answered just alike—except when they ask me the question most often duplicated, how to protnounce Strachey, Cabell, and De la Mare. As for little girls, I am sure the young sender of the following, which burst upon me last week, will not mind if I quote it word-for-word as a specimen of the range of a natural reader. "Dear Mrs. Becker:—I like everything that A. A. Milne has written and I have read 'When We Were Very Young' and 'The House at Pooh Corner' many times. Among more serious books I prefer 'The Education of a Princess.' I like anything about Russian history or the Little Colonel Stories. Yours truly, Betty. . . . Aged 11." The next time anyone generalizes to me about the tastes of this time of life I will show them this, and not a few other letters like it.

I love the way Anne Carroll Moore goes to work at this charming task in "Roads to Childhood" (Doubleday, Doran), the most ingratiating of the guides to young reading, so it seems to me. I treasure the unofficial book list given by Jean Webster's Judy, heroine of "Daddy-Long-Legs" (Century) in the chapter of this book that tells her guardian what she is reading at college to catch up with books not provided by the austere curriculum of the orphan asylum. She had to read "Little Women" in order, so to speak, to be a 100 percent American girl. I wish I could bring it about that not to have read "The Wind in the Willows" would be comparable to not having a new hat for Easter; every child should be in time at least exposed to it, and to "Puck of Pook's Hill"—not that our children always are. Certain books belong to each new generation as it comes along: "Mother Goose"—and hoots for those who object to it—lots of jingle poetry, sung or recited before the young person can talk, the Beatrix Potter books complete, some Kate Greenaway and Caldecott, the brilliant first ABC of Mr. Falls, the photographic "First Picture Book" of Mr. Steichen, the Dr. Dolittle series of Hugh Lofting, all the young Milnes, the "Just So Stories," and in time the "Jungle Books," John Bennett's "Master Skylark," Andrew Lang's line of fairy books, green, blue, and all the rest, Miss Coatsworth's beautiful "The Cat Who Went to Heaven," the peerless "Hitty" of Rachel Field—and by this time one is well on the way to the happy state where you are taken to a bookshop just as you were earlier made free of the candy store, only now you reach for a story instead of a sweet.

Everything Miss Moore has written about the choice and criticism of children's books is valuable; there is a marvellous big catalogue, "Realms of Gold" (Doubleday, Doran), from the Bookshop for Boys and Girls over which Miss Bertha Mahoney presides in Boston, with annotations making the contents clear for a prospective purchaser; there is a chapter in my "Reader's Guide Book" (Holt) that some have found helpful, and another in the first part of my "Adventures in Reading" (Stokes) on which a good many home libraries for young folks have been based. And in every library with a "Children's Room" there is advice for the asking, and it will be safe and sound. No department of the public library is in general better informed and working on more praiseworthy principles.

As for older favorites, read the chapter on children's reading eighty years ago in "Stepping Westward," the autobiography of Laura E. Richards just published by Appleton. Her general idea, she says, seems to have been "if you see a book, read it, especially if it's poetry." "I had Grimm, of course, and Hans Andersen, and knew them by heart, and 'Merry Tales for Little Folks,' a notable volume, edited by Madame de Chatelain; and 'The King of the Golden River,' a lifelong joy, one of the most precious of all children's books. . . . Of course we had 'The Wonder Book' and 'Tanglewood Tales'; I cannot remember when we did not have them, but I did not stop there with Hawthorne. I delighted in 'Twice-Told Tales' and 'Mosses from an Old Manse.' These I read over and over, till I knew them almost by heart. 'Howe's Masquerade,' 'Rappacini's Daughter' (most terrible of all), 'Lady Eleanor's Mantle,' 'The Great Carbuncle'; these were strong enchantments, never to be forgotten. And these bring me to Irving, to the 'Tales of the Alhambra' and 'Wolfert's Roost,' and 'The Sketch Book.' 'The love of lovely words' has always been strong in me; the very title, 'The Adelantado of the Seven Cities,' brings a thrill even today." Mrs. Richards does not remember when she began Dickens and Scott. "They, with the Bible and Shakespeare, seem in memory a kind of foundation for everything else." She browsed among the weightier tomes in her mother's and father's library—"My mother's German philosophers, Kant, Hegel, Spinoza—how familiar their backs!"—and she discovered Homer and Dante through the Flaxman illustrations; she thinks she first discovered Shakespeare, too, through pictures as she discovered "The Newcomes" and "Pendennis" from Thackeray's own illustrations.

The Maryland Public Library Advisory Commission apropos of its traveling library department states:

"Our traveling library department is maintained for the benefit of the people of the State with a view to giving book service until a permanent local library or better still a county library is established. In many places local conditions make it impossible or unwise to support a local library and in such places the traveling library provides for the book needs until a county library is started.

"The county is the logical library unit. It is economical and actually brings library service within the reach of everyone at a minimum cost. It is not a new experiment. For more than a quarter of a century county libraries have been successfully operated in many parts of the United States.

A traveling library is a collection of about thirty-five books, which is loaned for a period of four months, at the end of which time it may be returned and exchanged for four more months. . . . Each library consists of books suitable for children, young people, and adults. They are made up of about fifteen volumes of fiction and twenty volumes of non-fiction, which includes history, biography, travel, literature, science, etc."

"Cowper is our English Rousseau," says Professor H. J. Grierson, writing in the London *Observer:*

"His letters have taken their place among the very first in their kind. The egregious Anna Seward, who, in *her* letters walked on Johnsonian stilts, was indignant with Hayley for claiming approachless excellence for Cowper's Letters which any person of sense and education might have written. They have neither the critical interest and instruction of Pope's; the humorous strength of Johnson's . . . nor the brilliant elegance of Gray's. For sublimity of idea and strength of expression the 'Night Thoughts' (of Young) extremely transcend 'The Task.'

"Posterity has not endorsed her judgment either of the letters or the poem. It is the very absence of the qualities that Miss Seward indicates which gives a final charm to these perfectly natural yet never slipshod letters of a sensitive, humorous observant, Christian gentleman."

The Compleat Collector.

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Pace

THE one-hundred and sixty-eight superb selections from the Lothian libraries which are to be sold at the American Art Association-Anderson Galleries on January 27th and 28th will not be dispersed with the matter-of-fact expedition that characterizes the run-of-the-shelves book auction. The usual auction session embraces between two hundred and three hundred entries—three hundred is stout work, but it can be done. The Kern sale, as suited such a *tour de force* in dramaturgy, proceeded at a somewhat more decorous rhythm—just under one-hundred and fifty lots to the session. But the Lothian sale will handsomely underdo this average. Eighty-nine units will be sold at the opening session, and eighty (including the "Olive Branch" Petition, offered by another consignor and allotted a separate catalogue) at the second and concluding session.

The deliberately retarded tempo will befit the occasion and the magnificent chattels which will change hands with the fall of the hammer. Most of the thirty-five manuscripts in particular were the product of a day that took no thought of the morrow, save of that perpetual morrow wherein the glory of the superbly wrought miniatures would come true. Significant of the importance of this group is the fact that Seymour de Ricci was summoned from Paris to prepare the descriptions.

Of the separate items — manuscripts, early printed books, and Americana alike—many are of such dazzling magnitude that each would make a momentous auction session in itself. For example, no copy of Caxton's "Chronicles of England" or of his "Description of Britain" (both 1480) has ever been offered at public sale in America. They will appear in the Lothian sale as a single lot, for what the binder hath joined together let not cataloguer put asunder.

The public exhibition of the Lothian books and manuscripts, which will open on January 16th, will convert the display rooms of the Galleries into a veritable museum, offering such a lavish conspectus of the art of the written and the printed word as is not likely again to be available to casual inspection for many a day.

J. T. W.

Newtoniana

THE well-loved shade of George Henry Sargent assuredly hovered over Metuchen, New Jersey, on December 19th when his library was sold at auction under the direction of Charles F. Heartman. The proceeds, without any deduction, are to be turned over to Mrs. Sargent. The library was divided not alone into two sessions, but also into two separate catalogues, and chief interest centered in the second catalogue, which was devoted exclusively to the Sargent collection of A. Edward Newton. For George Sargent was both the Bibliographer of the *Boston Evening Transcript* and the bibliographer of A. Edward Newton.

Next to George Sargent's Newton bibliography (published at Philadelphia in 1927 by the Rosenbach Company in an edition of one hundred and ten copies) the sale catalogue of his collection is the best available checklist of Newtoniana. The catalogue is itself an authentic Newton item. It exists in two forms: the working issue, so to speak, of which eager bidders held copies in their hands, waving them tantalizingly and confusingly in the auctioneers' faces (of whom more anon), and a large-paper issue of two hundred and ninety-nine copies. The latter has a long preface by Mr. Newton—eight pages plus—which in the working issue is abridged to a page and a half, for long prefaces are difficult to wave in auctioneers' faces.

The auctioneers themselves merit separate treatment. The first to take the rostrum was A. Edward Newton in person. He lasted through the first sixty-eight lots, an amateur record for this vicinity, retiring gracefully in favor of Barton Currie, who handled the remaining fifteen lots with distinction, adroitly disposing of the first of the group to Mr. Newton himself. While a mere spectator Mr. Currie had startled the assemblage by elevating a bid of twenty dollars to fifty-two dollars and eighty cents in a single jump—an open, not merely an amateur record. And while acting as auctioneer he achieved another triumph which has never been duplicated in the metropolitan area. With the bidding on one lot hovering comfortably around twenty dollars, Mr. Currie suddenly reared it to forty, and the lot immediately went to forty-five and was sold.

There were gaps in George Sargent's Newton collection, but of what use is a collection without gaps? It is one of the ironies of bibliography (there are several) that the bibliographer as collector must always be two or three jumps ahead of the collector as bibliographer. Thus it happens, by a paradox that bookfolk, be they disposers or acquirers, can understand, that in the catalogue of the Sargent collection of Newton there are numerous items that inevitably were "not in Sargent."

The Sargent sale catalogue is one of several recent Newton items of whose existence omnivorous Newtonians must be made aware. Foremost among these is the twenty-fifth Newton Christmas offering—a pamphlet in the familiar slate-blue wrappers entitled "A Thomas Hardy Memorial" which describes the unveiling nine months ago on Egdon Heath of the monument reared "by a few of his American admirers," an enduring memento for whose presence Mr. Newton is largely responsible. Another item is the One-Thousandth Caxton Head Catalogue, issued by James Tregaskis and Son from their shop hard by the British Museum, with a fine frontispiece portrait of the late James Tregaskis and with a prolegomenon by A. E. N. Another, already noted in these columns, is Catalogue LXXX of Dawson's Book Shop of Los Angeles (printed at the Grabhorn Press) with a Newton foreword, and with a portrait of Mr. Newton reproduced from a photograph made by John Friend of the Dawson staff.

J. T. W.

Keep Dry

MUCH of the world, English- and other-speaking, tutored and untutored, awaited with alert concern the outcome of the race with rain that followed the recent Vatican disaster, and rejoiced in the victory of the workers who toiled night and day in the debris. William Blades gave water a poor second place in his terrifying census of "The Enemies of Books"—second, of course, after fire. Water is available (except in the Sahara, Death Valley, and the West Forties) in many forms, and rain is only one of these—from the bookman's point of view, one of the last to worry about. But Blades's roving and inquisitorial eye found numerous examples of its havoc fifty years ago. "I could mention many instances," he re-

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ported, "one especially, where a window having been left broken for a long time, the ivy had pushed through and crept over a row of books, each of which was worth hundreds of pounds. In rainy weather the water was conducted, as by a pipe, along the tops of the books and soaked through the whole." He records an even more flagrant case wherein "the rain came straight on to a bookcase through a skylight, saturating continually the top shelf Caxtons and other early English books, one of which, although rotten, was sold soon after by permission of the Charity Commissioners for £200." Charity, in this instance, clearly began at home.

Rain is bad enough, but how much worse an ocean! "In 1785," Blades noted, "died the famous Maffei Pinelli, whose library was celebrated throughout the world. It had been collected by the Pinelli family for many generations and comprised an extraordinary number of Greek, Latin, and Italian works, many of them first editions, beautifully illuminated, together with numerous MSS. dating from the eleventh to the sixteenth century. The whole library was sold by the Executors to Mr. Edwards, bookseller, of Pall Mall, who placed the volumes in three vessels for transport from Venice to London. Pursued by Corsairs, one of the vessels was captured, but the pirate, disgusted at not finding any treasure, threw all the books into the sea. The other two vessels escaped and delivered their freight safely, and in 1789-90 the books which had been so near destruction were sold at the great room in Conduit Street, for more than £9,000."

As narrated by Charles and Mary Elton in "The Great Book-Collectors" (1893), the story differs in several important particulars but is at one with the Blades version in the great particular—to wit, that pirates seized one of three vessels and threw the books overboard. The Pinelli was Gian-Vincenzio, the date 1601 (the very year of Mark Twain's "Conversation . . . in the Time of the Tudors"), and the port of embarkation Genoa. The books which escaped seizure, moreover, were bought by Cardinal Frederic Borromeo and became the basis for the great Ambrosian Library at Milan. The library of Maffeo Pinelli was another collection altogether, and was sold in London "at prices which barely covered the expenses incurred."

It is comforting to know that this harrowing incident occurred not on the eve of the French Revolution but in the twilight of Elizabeth. But carelessness came in when pirates went out, and as late as 1929 a case of finely-printed quartos slipped a hawser while being loaded for America at a European port and remained below the surface longer than the shipper cared to think about. When salvaged and tremulously uncrated, the contents were in reasonably good shape, and the copies near the center of the container were actually as issued.

For all that, one would prefer not to have one's books in the running brooks.

J. T. W.

Letter Design

MILTON: SAMSON AGONISTES. Florence: Victor Hammer. 1931.

THE designing of letters for the printing press began with the frank imitation of the pen work of the scribe, because those letters were commonly used and recognized, and because the early printing press endeavored to supply books which would look like manuscript books. Whether the early types were black-letter or roman or italic, they resembled current handwriting of the formal sort.

Immediately after the inception of letter designing for printing, type faces began to be formalized—to get away from the manuscript originals, and to develop arbitrary standards and forms of their own. The process of letter design became more and more sophisticated: the letters of Claude Garamond, for example, represent a complete emancipation from the scribe's pen strokes, and a fairly complete adaptation to the peculiar art of the printer. The type of John Baskerville and finally that of Giambattista Bodoni represent the final steps in the complete sophistication of the roman alphabet. They were fully modelled letters, utterly impossible of simple, manuscript formation. Since then there has been no original handling of the alphabet, and type designers have worked over the old typographic material in innumerable ways, always far from the manuscript originals.

With the complete reworking of the original letters, and the numerous fantastic alphabets there has come a stagnation in type design attested by the reappearance of such "skeleton" forms (akin to Greek inscriptions) as the "sans-serif" letters of the German designers of today —letters eagerly adopted by advertisers who had worked over the old material *ad nauseam*. That some new development of the roman alphabet would come about has been evident. Active interest has been shown by Stanley Morison in his extensive examination of script, italic, and cursive forms. Frederic Warde's Arrighi italic—a lovely but far from conventional italic—was another tentative. But perhaps the first definite attempt to resuscitate or develop a newer form was in the Subiaco type of the Ashendene Press; Graily Hewitt's recent Treyford type is another return to pen forms. But the latest attempt, and one which carries out a new theory of the alphebet (though definitely harking back to the half-uncial —"the general book-hand of the Roman empire"), is the form evolved by a Viennese painter living near Florence, Victor Hammer.

His theory, if I understand it correctly, is that the ideal type form would be one which would avoid the basic vertical strokes of the ancient black-letter and of the modern German text letters, as well as the excessive and bothersome ascenders and descenders of the traditional roman types. The Latin tongue set in type was the common method of showing off type founders' specimens for generations, and such specimens set in English were less satisfactory owing to the different letters most commonly in use in the two languages. Hence Hammer has sought to make a type face which when used for English or German should be as effective as common roman letters are apt to be in Latin. And, in addition, his letters have a definite pen quality which has seldom been obtained by any type designer.

Having decided upon this method of designing his letters, he has had the punches cut, the type cast, and the pages set and printed, all in his own house, either by himself or by a small group of young students.

The first book from the press is just published, and invites careful scrutiny. The actual printing of the book is of much interest for several technical reasons. In the first place the paper is a remarkably mellow old-fashioned sheet—"carta bambagina"—thin, flexible, and of beautiful texture. It is a really beautiful sheet of hand-made paper. For black ink he has had recourse to vine-black, an ink pigment which Frank Wiborg in his work on "Printing Ink" rather too positively states cannot be used for letterpress printing. The sheets are printed by hand on a wooden hand press. Here is a touch of preciosity which cannot be defended on technical grounds.

The type is at first difficult to read, owing to the change not so much in letter forms as in their shape and position relative to normal, a change necessitated by the determination to bring them all of substantially an equal height. This handicap to quick legibility can be overcome without much difficulty. Not so the affectation of narrow spacing between the words. For affectation I believe this to be in spite of the printer's assertion that it is no detriment to *oral* reading. It does make almost impossible the reading of the Milton: though the printer's contention that it does not bother in a book which can and should be repeatedly read may be considered as his apologia. The new letters and the lack of space are certainly an impediment to easy reading.

The letters, however, possess real beauty, which is rare in any type face. The paper is unimpeachable, the printing is finely done, and the fact that the whole work (aside from the making of the paper) was accomplished by a small group of men working in the same house results in an artistic entity which is of more than passing interest.

Counter Attractions

NEW & OLD BOOKS :: COLLECTORS' ITEMS :: STAMPS & PRINTS :: LITERARY SERVICES

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from THE INNER SANCTUM *of*
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In an earlier issue of *The Inner Sanctum* your correspondents have recorded their indebtedness to FRANCIS JOSEPH XAVIER SCULLY for the original intuition and instigation which enabled them to acquire so important a book as *Bernard Shaw* by FRANK HARRIS.

FRANCIS SCULLY and his wife have just written *The Inner Sanctum* of their pilgrimage to the grave of FRANK HARRIS. It is in the *Cimetière Caucade*, on a noble eminence in Nice, overlooking the Mediterranean, and sheltered by cypresses. FRANK HARRIS died a poor man, and the grave is simple. But now the book is a success, and his widow and friends are planning a memorial shaft, a suitable plaque, and a bust in bronze. His final resting place is to be rearranged so that his head will be under an olive tree and his feet toward the sea.

The letter from Nice was replete with dramatic details. It discloses, for example, that FRANCIS SCULLY was not only the trusted secretary of FRANK HARRIS, and his confidential adviser, but a friend in the deepest and noblest sense. When the final infirmities came upon FRANK HARRIS, as he toiled feverishly against time to complete the biography of *Bernard Shaw*, Scully stayed with his hero night and day, and gallantly pulled him through.

Not only did Scully record with Boswellian fidelity and gusto all the FRANK HARRIS reminiscences and conversations, but he pitched in on the collecting of the letters and documents, the completion of his research, and, at some points, actually did some of the writing itself. By a strange twist of circumstance in this unique and unclassifiable duo-autobiography, it finally fell to BERNARD SHAW himself to complete the editorial revision, finish the proof-reading after the death of FRANK HARRIS, and see the book through the press in scholarly and authoritative form. . . . Thus even in his own biography (as several of the reviewers have pointed out) G. B. S., as usual, has the last word.

ESSANDESS.

Will You
Won't You
Will You
Won't You
Won't You

please look around for the December 19th issue of THE SATURDAY REVIEW and give your coupon-clipping fingers a reminiscent thrill?

Page 395 was an important page. More than nine hundred subscribers have contributed the unavoidable two cents.

THE
SATURDAY REVIEW
25 West 45th Street
New York City

The PHŒNIX NEST

MAY the New Year be all you wish it to be! There isn't any harm in hoping, anyway! Two books of stories that open it auspiciously for us are "The Dr. Thorndyke Omnibus" (Dodd, Mead), a collection of all the best tales by *R. Austin Freeman* concerning that eminent scientific detective, and "Nixey's Harlequin" (Knopf), a volume of new tales by one of our very favorite story-tellers, *A. E. Coppard*. . . .

Wilson Follett has been praising to us "The Kirbys," by *Margaret Whipple* (Putnam's), which we are going to make one of the first books we read in the New Year. He's keen on this novel. . . .

James B. O'Neil, the Librarian at the United States Penitentiary, McNeil Island, Washington, who gets out *The Island Lantern*, has lost four of his complete set of the novels of *Eugene Manlove Rhodes*, and wants Houghton Mifflin to reprint the whole set. He is a great fan for that novelist who is now in Southern California, and has written the following concerning him:

BALLADE OF THE HOPE OF A RETURN TO SOME SEMBLANCE OF SANITY

Time's rampant scythe has swept amain
Since Bransford rode El Paso way;
The maguey flower has bloomed again
Since when MacGregor—andale!—
Crossed the San Quentin ere the day—
A Lobo, yet a man of note;
Since Charlie See turned grave to gay.
Where are the tales that Gene Rhodes wrote?

What spatted dude or booted swain
Tolls Elinor the fair away
'Twixt dances—but to plead in vain?
And still does Old Wes Pringle stay—
With trusty Colt or cunning play—
The Sheriff, backed by badge and vote,
Yet helpless, he and his array?
Where are the tales that Gene Rhodes wrote?

The novel of today's a pain;
Enough to turn a bald head grey.
'High time the reader raised some Cain
Re modern books (um! quote: Cliché
For all that's ullage; foul decay
That smells to Heaven stop unquote)
That sicken even mid-Broadway.
Where are the tales that Gene Rhodes wrote?

ENVOY

Masters of Books and Authors: Say,
Is all your publishing by rote?
Is all your world sophistiqué?
Where are the tales that Gene Rhodes wrote?

Our friend "*esh*" reminds us of the following epigrams by *Martin Armstrong*, whose novels we know. We wish we had written them ourself, in our *Scrap-Bag:*

REVIEWERS

People with a turn for spite
Write about what others write,
And their still more spiteful brothers
Write on those who write on others.
Lord, who rulest sea and land,
Save us from the second-hand!

ANTHOLOGISTS

Some folk gather bones and rags
From other people's rubbish bags.
Then, when they have found enough
Of the miscellaneous stuff,
They peddle round the rag and bone
Fancying it's all their own!

Leonard Bacon, poet and satirist, is on the eve of returning from his villa near Florence, Italy, to his family acres at Peacedale, Rhode Island. We have recently gleaned from his correspondence the following comment written after his reading "The Edwardians," by V. Sackville West:

There was a young woman of Knole
With great penetration of soul.
She said: "Under Edward,
When lovers went bedward,
'Twas nothing—if nobody tole."

The Second Annual National Poetry Speaking Festival (whee!) sponsored by the School of Speech of Northwestern University, will be held at that institution of learning, on the Evanston Campus, March 24 and 25. Address all communications to "Committee, Poetry Speaking Festival," School of Speech of Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. *Robert Frost, Harriet Monroe, Carl Sandburg*, and *Lew Sarett* are among those on the Advisory Council. The contest is open to men and women, eighteen years of age or over. It will be divided into six sections, three for men and three for women. The number in each section will be limited to twenty-five. The winner of the finals will be awarded the Sidney Lanier Medal for excellence in Poetry Speaking. . . .

Coward-McCann announces for the Spring a biography of the first American Bolshevik, of that brilliant American War correspondent, *John Reed*, who wrote "Ten Days that Shook the World." *Michael Gold* is the biographer. . . .

Eugene F. Saxton of Harper's has sent us a most interesting broadside which Harper's is planning to use with all their authors in the preparation of manuscript. It condenses a long experience with the preparation of manuscript and the reading of proof. The cost of galley and page correction, sometimes even plate correction, hangs, says 'Gene, like a millstone around many books, and Harper's hope to effect a saving both for author and publisher through adherence to the advice given in this broadside. An excellent idea! Most authors have little conception of the work to be done on a book in the process of putting it into type. . . .

The firm of Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, Inc., will continue its publishing business under that title. *Mr. Cape* will remain as President of the new publishing house with *Robert Ballou* acting as managing editor. *Margaret Cheney Dawson* continues with Cape, and *Muriel Cameron Bodkin* will handle publicity and advertising. *Harrison Smith* is, of course, to head his own new firm. . . .

Mrs. Sherman Haight, known for her good work with children's books, flew with *Lindbergh* in his clipper ship to Colombia and back in Thanksgiving week, 1931. She had, she reports, a copy of our own *Dr. Canby's* "Classic Americans" in her lap, but whether she read it between a Thanksgiving breakfast in South America and a Thanksgiving dinner in North America she does not say. Mrs. Haight and our esteemed Editor took *A. A. Milne* recently to the Bronx Zoo, where he rode the three hundred year old Galapágos turtle, and was urged to insure his immortality by autographing the front page of the shell. He visited the big and little Poohs also, heard the rattlers rattle, and saw the cobras cobra. The king snake was given an out-of-cage holiday for the occasion, and, wreathing his neck, tried hard to swallow Mr. Milne's fountain pen. The noisy sea lions were particularly helpful, for in this author's forthcoming play, which he returns to London to rehearse, the stage directions for one young lady read, "she barks like a seal." . . .

Harold Bell Wright, Sweetness and Light, has now been added to the list of Harper and Brothers—they of all others—the next Ozark novel from this sterling fellah being broadcasted as "Ma Cinderella;" but abashed by New York's high society shindies, Mr. Wright has since left for the quiet West Indies. 'Tis there, where no lewd New York dowager leers, he is writing his sons of his formative years. . . .

William Maxwell is glad we are fond of the shorter forms of English verse, and so calls our attention to a brevity penned by *Miss Katherine Harker* of Mill Valley, California, a spot we once knew well: It is entitled "I Get to Heaven (A Criticism)":

I said, "Now the matter is cleared,
You are that old man with a beard,"
And then I grew bold,
"And the pavements are gold
And the angels have wings
And saints haloes and things—
It even is worse than I feared!"

The poetry contest of the Nebraska Writers Guild is open to all, whether or not a resident of Nebraska. The prize for these is fifty dollars. All mss. must be submitted before March 15th. For full information write to Theodore C. Diers, Secretary, Nebraska Writers Guild, Station A, Lincoln, Nebraska. The poems are limited to sixty lines and the name of the author must not appear on the mss. but be inclosed with title of poem in a separate envelope. . . .

So here's wishing you that fifty!

THE PHOENICIAN.

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